FOLKLORE AND HISTORY OF KASHMIR

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

The loving memory of my brother

Abdul Gani Bhat

Who introduced me to the world of

Art, culture and history

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"The history of a nation's poetry is the essence of its history, political, scientific, religious. With all these the complete History of Poetry will be familiar: the national physiognomyin its finest traits, and through its successive stages of growth, will be clear to him; he will discern the grand spiritual tendency of every period, which was the highest Aim and Enthusiasm of mankind in each, and how one epoch evolved in itself from the other. He has to record the highest aim of a nation, in its successive directions and developments; for by this poetry of a nation modulates itself; this is the Poetry of a nation. Such were the primary essence of a true history of poetry.

Carlyle:*Esays*

Foreword

Traditions, complex in nature, do not comprise an unchanging heritage that is passed on from one generation to another; similar is the case with folklore. Since folklore is embedded in tradition, it undergoes transformations with the passage of time by adopting new trends. Even a single event depicted in folklore in a particular time-frame is described differently in different geographical settings. The folklore as it exists today is not essentially the same as it appeared a couple of centuries ago in this geopolitical entity of Kashmir. As in China and Egypt, folklore in Kashmir is deep rooted in the culture of the people.Likewise, the rest of the subcontinent developed the art of historiography very late while Kashmir's historiography tradition dates back to the sixth and seventh centuries that finally culminated in the form of *Rajatarangani* compiled in 1148 A.D.According to Kalhana, the author of the book, he had many original works of earlier periods at his disposal on the basis of which he constructed the early history of Kashmir.Despite the archaeological and archival significance of the book, scholars in the field of Kashmir history find many contradictions and shortcomings in it, both in terms of approach and style. There are several links missing in the *Rajatarangani* and other written chronicles and as such a scholar is not in a position to analyze the social drama of human civilization in its natural continuity. Here comes the role of oral tradition preserved in the folklore of the community. Although folklore cannot be free from myths and

fable and other forms of fiction, it is at the same time a reliable communicative medium.

Kashmiri folklore or oral tradition for its beauty, diversity and richness has received attention of scholars in several fields of learning such as linguistics, anthropology, folklore and history. Gunadhe's *Brahatkatha,* Somadeva's *Kathasarita sagara* Hinton Knowles , author of the much admired anthology of Kashmiri folk tales, rightly said, "Kashmir as a field of folk literature is perhaps not surpassed in fertility by any other country in the world.'' Kashmiri, folklore is fertile not only in quantity but quality as well.

Kashmiri folklore is culture-specific and every aspect of it has to be understood in its context. A genre of folk literature *kath*, for instance, is multidimentional in character and essence. There can be several meanings of a single *kath* and it can be interpreted in many a different way. The tales and proverbs in the Kashmiri language are extremely complex and it is the complexity that has given the folklore of Kashmir a unique character.

Some European scholars who were attracted by this great treasure of tales and a source of people's history, besides Hinton Knowles, were Aurel Stein and George Abraham Grierson. A wonderful collection of Kashmiri folk tales in their original linguistic form is *Hatim's Tales* compiled by Stein as he heard them from a professional story teller, named Hatim Tilwony; the tales were translated into English by Grierson. Very recently some modern scholars have produced their dissertations on the folk tales of Kashmir. A few attempts have also been made to sift the folklore as a source of Kashmir history. Nevertheless, a holistic approach is needed to exploit this invaluable source of history . Folklore

is not confined to literature alone. It encompasses arts and crafts, medicine, law, music, dance and many other aspects of social life. There is hardly any facet of civilization that is not reflected in the folklore;as such this form of source material, if analyzed with a historical perspective, would help us in having a better understanding of our culture and civilization. Such a study would also enable us to understand the intricacies of various social problems and in finding probable reformative measures.

Dr. Farooq Fayaz, a keen observer of social dynamics, has scanned the folklore of Kashmir in a very fascinating way while never losing sight of the changing historical context. He has successfully integrated this form of source material with the archival material that is available in abundance. It is a fact that medieval tyranny did not permit sensitive scholars and poets to articulate their reaction and bring the facts of their time to light. They expressed their inner mind obliquely through in symbolic and, sometimes, esoteric expressions. But the general masses , on the other hand did not shy away in giving vent to their spontaneous reactions. Our *Ladi Shah*, for instance, is a glaring example of this daring expression wherein the anonymous authors expressed their resentment without any restraint.

Dr. Fayaz has the required talent and method to analize systematically the variegated repertoire of Kashmiri folk literature and folklore and to unveil for his readers the unknown recesses of history and mysteries of the past of the people, particularly in a period when the people were denied even their basic right to live, and expression was deemed as revolt.

I am happy that Dr. Fayaz has succeeded in creating a realistic image of the women-folk of Kashmir by analyzing a variety of songs that have been authored

by women of the past who died in anonymity.The last chapter of the book, ' Folk Beliefs and Practices' likewise gives us some glimpses of the popular faith of the people not restricted by any system or text.
Dr. Fayaz has penetrated the mist of myth and ritual and discovered several facts of our collective existence as a community. The study, I am sure, will certainly unfold many new pages of the undeciphered history of the Himalayan Kingdom of Kashmir and stimulate fresh research.

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Preface

In recent decades, historical research has continued to enlarge its domain and steadily push back its frontiers, exploring new territories without abandoning its more familiar terrain. In addition to this, history is also forging closer links with other disciplines like anthropology, economics,philosophy,linguistics, literature and so on.All things being interconnected in intellectual spheres, a re-evaluation of factors other that those which had been considered the primary determinants in a mechanistic and materialistic vision of history led to historians' shifting their attention to the more intangible aspects of collective reality such as beliefs, images, processes of opinion formation, aspirations and cultural traits. This attention extended in many newly created directions and perspectives undoubtedly comprise the most recent chapter in the evolution of historiography.

Until very recently historians cultivated unavoidable grudge to acknowledge literature, particularly the popular literature ,as a legitimate source for reconstructing the history of a people belonging to any geographical region. Intoxicated with the dose of conventional sources, our chroniclers and historians failed to a great extent in understanding the relevance and significance of language and literature as a primary and the most reliable source of history. Thanks are due to those conscious literary based historo-analysts who for the first time explored the undercurrent historical truth in the works of creative and popular literature. The attempt received new impetus at the hands of *Annals'* historians who wholeheartedly advocated for ' *total history'*.

The truth stands that until recently our historians abundantly relied on conventional sources, which resulted in ' half truth' documentation of historical facts. In context of Kashmir history, this can be substantiated from the fact that the court historians of medieval Kashmir altogether marginalized the life and role of several distinguished personalities like Lal Dyad and Shekh Noorud Din. Being preoccupied with tapping of elite and court oriented activities, our historians completely forgot the otherwise great historical role of the two medieval luminaries.

Women constituted another neglected segment of our historical scholarship. No doubt, women of high political profile attracted the attention of our few historians, but no attempt has so far been made to either document the life and conditions of rural women folk or to identify the reasons for socio-psychological disturbances that our women folk was subjected to during the periods of great historical crises. To help in understanding the different dimensions of Kashmiri women in a broader perspective, an attempt has been made to examine two major genres of folk- literature, i.e., *rov* and *waniwun*, which are recognized to be a running commentary on Kashmiri women.The inner soul of Kashmiri women cannot be comprehended objectively unless the two major genres are studied seriously and attentively.

From the stand point of the ' great tradition', a number of scholarly attempts have already been made to analyze the historical processes which worked in bringing the religious tradition into Kashmir in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but from the view point of ' little tradition', no attempt has so far been made to examine the distinctive religious personality of Kashmir and the belief system of the people. In the study at hand, an humble attempt has been made to trace out the historical and traditional forces and agents which have had a role in modifying the peculiar religious make-up of Kashmiris.

No doubt, very good deal of scholarly work has been done by both European and Indian scholars to highlight the social life of Kashmiris, but while dealing with very important and equally sensitive dimensions of Kashmiris' social life, no cognizance was given to the rich popular literature which otherwise forms the real mirror of Kashmiri social life. No denying the fact, Kashmiri folk literature presents a true reflection of various aspects of Kashmiri social setting, the emerging theses broadly focused on various categories of folk literature and with its help, an endeavor has been made to draw a true and pragmatic pen picture of Kashmiri social life.

I am grateful to all those people who have helped or tolerated me in various activities involved in accomplishing this study. My thanks are due , first and foremost, to Prof. Mohammad Ishaq Khan who inspired me to undertake the study as a research project; I owe him a great debt indeed. I am also grateful to Prof Shafi Shauq without whose invaluable guidance and advice, this work could never have seen the light of the day.

I am indebted to Professor Mansoora Haider of AMU and Professor Muzaffar Alam of JNU whose suggestions and encouragement enabled me to enter into world of written word. Dr. Jawahar Lal Handoo of the CIIL, Mysore deserves my special thanks for his caring interest in me.

I owe much to Prof. Abdul Majeed Mattoo, Dean Social Sciences, University of Kashmir for his unfailing love, encouragement and inspiration.

I am also grateful to my friend Prof Gulshan Majeed of CCAS, University of Kashmir for many valuable suggestions.

I would also like to record my thanks to the men and institutions, too numerous to name individually, from whom primary material was garnered. This list includes , among others, those scores of village elders, rural women folk and professional singers and story teller. At my request, they very gladly unlocked the chests of the oral tradition.

I shall be feeling highly taxed if I fail to express my thanks to my colleagues and friends : Dr. M. Asharaf Wani, Head Department of History, Dr. Parvez Ahmad, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Khan and Dr. M. Yousuf.

Mr. Ashraf Sahil, former Director Radio Kashmir, presently the director of Doordarshan Kendra Stringer, deserves special appreciation for making my accessibility easy to the Radio Archives. I am also thankful to Meeraj-ud Din , Additional Secretary, Cultural Academy , and Mr. Jindyal, Director, State Information Department for providing me different sets of coloured photographs depicting various facets of the cultural life of the people.

Last but not the least, I must thank my wife for her cooperation and indulgence in the face of strain that the writing this book involved.

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Srinagar, June 2001.

range of the source material , including all those sources that were simply ignored by the historians of the past who once believed history to be the account of the rise and fall of kings . The Annals School of France [3], in particular , has given a new direction to historical reseach by laying a good deal of emphasis on the wholistic approach to history. The new approach in history is essentially interdisciplinary which demands understanding the variegated facets of of the past phases of history in their inter-relationships while recognizing the significance of each individual face[4].Viewed against this background , it would be a profitable and rewarding exercise to scrutinize the Kashmiri folk literature which reflects various aspects of Kashmiri society and , at the same time the dynamism behind those aspects during the critical period of its history, that is 1819-1947.

The period has been chosen as it has been a period of unique crises in the history of Kashmiri people[5]. In the first place , the Sikh Rule in Kashmiri (1819-1846) was marked by tyranny and oppression and regular drain of wealth and natural resources which led to appalling magnitude of misery and poverty of the people[6]. The unscrupulous exploitation of the people by the aliens naturally ended in discontent and revolt among the rural peasantry and urban labour which the succeeding Dogra Maharajas had to quell either by force or by strategem. Socondly , the Sikh Rule paved way for the Dogra occupation of Kashmir in the wake of Zorawar Singh's[7] conquest of Ladakh. The problems of the people of Kashmir came inited the attention of the new masters after the sale of the whole terrain including the Valley and the adjoining valleys by the British to the Dogra Cief, Gulab Singh , which eventually created a the new geographical entity called the Jammu and Kashmir State[8].

The Dogra Rule in Kashmir (1846-1947) may rightly be divided into two sub-periods, viz.,1846-1889, and 1890-1947. The sub- period was marked by the increased transference of property rights to the Punjabis and the Dogras . Cosequently the Kashmiri peasants were deprived of their property rights and this together with grant of *chaks* (estates) to some influential Pandits of the city encouraged landlordism. This

new mechanism which apparently looked to bring big chunks of barren land under cultivation and therby ensure enormous increase in land revenue of the state , inwardly aimed at giving boost to the class which would serve the colonial interests of the Dogra Rule. The division of land had a tremendous bearing on the social fabric of the Kashmiri society. The periodical peasant migration that followed this new agricultural device initiated by the Dogras during the period under reference led to far reaching consequences of socio-cultural and religio-economic nature in the Valley[9].It helped in developing a mode of collective mentality and a socio-religious psyche which was distinctively unique in character and spirit. The main aim of the present study is to identify the distinctive characteristics of Kashmiri social life particularly during the period under reference through the rich treasure of oral literaure and folk-lore. Besides, fucussing upon the peculiar social setting and the collective mentality, our attempt shall be to examine the different forms of Kashmiri folk-literature,as most of the genres, besides depicting the tyrannous behaviour of the official elite, throw a flood of light on the socio-cultural and religio-economic dimentions of Kashmiri social life.

The second part of the Dogra rule was marked by Kashmiris' gradual transition from medieval to modern era. With the development in the means of communication and particularly the opening of the Jehlum Valley Road , far reaching changes took place in every aspect of the people's life.Modern education introduced by Christian missionaries evoked a mixed response in the Valley , and under the impact of new influences, the age-old social customs, rituals , superstitions, and practices underwent remarkable changes.The present study aims at bringing into focus the mixed response of the common masses towards these changes of far-reaching social significance. Since there was a complete ban on the freedom of expression and there was a close net work of rapacious officials to monitor every activity of disgruntled Kashmiris, people recorded silently the agonies in their slates of their bosoms and transmitted them directly or obliquely through various categories of Kashmiri folk-literature.This rich treasure of

historical information has not till now been utilized fully by the historians for the reconstruction of social history of Kashmir. One of the significant forms of Kashmiri folk songs *Lari Shah*[10],is the most important source in this regard. The other equally important genre also contains invaluable information about the yearnings, aspirations, protests, beliefs,customs, rituals and superstitions practised by the common folk. The most horrifying memories connected with the most inhuman practice of corvee[11] (beggar) are pathetically recorded in the popular literature of the period. The different *Bhanda pathers*[12] (folk-dramas) are suggestive of the tyrannies of the Sikh and the Dogra rulers and their administrative subordinates.

The songs associated with festivity and marriages like *rov*[13]and *waniwun*[14] form a running commentary on the pains and pangs of Kashmiri women , deprived of every right in the male dominated Kashmiri society in general , and during the period under survey ,in particular.A sudy regarding the position of Kashmiri women shall remain incomplete without a serious examination of Kashmiri folk-literature.The researchers who until very recently relied more on the established , would not explore in toto the real agony and anguish to which the daughters of this land of Shardha were accustomed to. The innumerable social evils which inadvertently found their way in the social fabric of Kashmir in the wake of long periodical male migration to distant plains of the Punjab could hardly find any place in our historical literature.Therefore, an attempt has to be made in the present.. study to examine analytically the information embodied in in the *waniwun* and *Rov* songs of Kashmiri folk-literature so that the position and status of Kashmiri women during the period is understood objectively. Although our primary aim ,is to examine folklore and folk-literature as a source for studying Kashmiri society, an attempt shall be made to study such hitherto unutilized sources in conjunction with the material used by the historians so far.

The proposed study would not treat works of folk-literature as a mere play of momentary or spontaneous expression of imagination, or isolated outbursts of excited brains but deep-felt expressions rooted in the ethos of Kashmiri society. We aim at assessing different genres of Kashmiri folk-literature

such as proverbs, sayings, riddles songs, tales, parables, and other forms of the discipline, produced or in use, during the period of historical crises, not from a view point of literaturew but from the vantage point of history.We shall try to exercise utmost caution while studying variety of folk literary composition.In this regard, an attempt shall be made to substanciate the findings gathered from different categories of folk-literature by the established historical source material like official documents which, among other things, include creative literature, travelogues, and the texts of the Sufi saints.

Natural calamities ,like floods, famines, draughts, fires and earthquakes which formed the distinctive feature of Kashmir history from the remote times, occurred most frequently during the period under study. How these recurring natural calamities helped in fashioning the peculiar socio-religious behaviour of Kashmiris shall also form a subject of debate in the present work. We are fortunate enough to have a good amount of literary material available in the *Lari Shah* which privide adequate information about the subject under citation.Customs, habits, rituals, and traditions have rightly beenacknowledged as a repository of the social heritage of human society all over the world[15].These socially approved exercises not only depict the psycho-social make-up of the society , but they reveal the multiple religious beliefs and thought processes of a people. These uniformly approved ways of collective acting also cluster the social feelings;the obedience of customary rules which constitute as one of the most important elementary ways in which the individual responds to the call of social life and realizes his dependence upon the group[16].

The present work attempts to examine the wide range of customs ,rituals, and ceremonies practiced by Kashmiries from a view point of social history and shall be our endeavor to review these approved collective exercises as a part of socio-religious life of Kashmiri society.

The folk-lorists bring into focus popular religious shades, food habits, modes of dress, means of amusement and recreation,customary laws etc. and thereby derive a picture of the complexities of socio-cultural style of a selected region and its people.While a good deal of research has been done with

regard to the political and administrative aspects of Kashmir history, very little effort has so far been made to study the culture, comlex tradions, and the social life of the common people.The researchers have altogether neglected the study of folk-lore as a source of information, which otherwise should have provided a useful index to the life-style of the people.The folk-literature preserved in different genres reflects the development of human mind during the different periods of historical times.Since the major source of folk-literature is human society itself[17],the elemental moorings that are at the root of human society are sought to be illustrated in a very artistic manner in different categories of folk-literature. Being recognized fully as an unornamented means of mass expression, folk-literature has now assumed the status of a primary and the most reliable source of historical research and information[18].It has been recognized beyond doubt that this kind of popular literature is woven round the commoner's aspirations , desires and hopes, urges and fears, games and feasts, rituals and festivals, beliefs and superstitions, sorrows and joys and, as such, presents an unambiguous account of different shades of social life of human society. Since the new concept of history extends considerable weightage to understanding the life pattern of the commoners as against the elite and the privilged (as was the subject of historical literature in the past) and intends to study man in wider context of human history, as such, the importance of folk-lore as a source for studying the history of Kashmiri society can never be minimized.

Literature and History

Literature as an important discpline of art has always been defined as an imaginative representation of life . The element of art and imagination ,with maximum stress on the emotional make-up of human mind , no doubt, distanced the discipline of literature from the domain of history. Until very recently historians believed that poetry reflected life not as a documentaion of facts but as manifestation of ideas nurtured by the vibrations of consciousness[19].They therefore attached little importance to this kind of literary source.To them literature

lacked the necessary attraction as it had no elite orientation which was supposed to be the prerequisite for every historical literature. The element of imagination which is thought to be the soul of literature, was given the status of an untouchable and it was thought as something exlusively anti-historical, to treat imaginationas a tool to understand the psycho-social pulse of an individual or a society[20]. But the attitude underwent a considerable change with the illuminating theories put forward by the pioneers of the new school of Total History who asserted that no historical fact can be understandable unless analysed and examined from inter-disciplinary approach[21]. They believed that an individual could only be meaningfully comprehended within his social context. This helped in liberating the historian from the conservative outlook which made him hesitant over the years to see its relationship with the whole spectrum of human sciences and the domain of art as one of the equals. This not only widened the range of historical evidence and the source material ,but it also extended the boundaries of historians'focus from the elite to commoners. The object of historans attention was extended to cover a whole range of phenomena from material structures to the secrets of the unconscious.In other words, the historians ' thrust was shifted from the individual to the collective , from political to social history, from description to analysis, from monocausal to multidimentional explanations[22]. The approach also opened the door for all , who had previously been perceived either to be without history or were kept out of the ambit of history. This new approach to history extended thereby the historians legitimate sources well beyond the conventional documents to the widest range of the written and the unwritten evidence.

This extention of historians' legitimate boundaries provided enough liberty to scholars to bring those otherwise abandoned areas of study under the perview of historical review. One such marginalised areas of study till the seventies of the erstwhile century was folk-lore. The importance of folk-lore as an academic descipline was abundantly recognized first by the sociologists and anthropologists . In the past twenty years the trend continued. An increasing number of social anthropologists , notably Clifford Goertz and Marshal Sahins

gave their studies a historical dimention in order to make them more scientific and more objective and scientific gave their studies a historical dimension[23]. Of late , historians have begun to realize the significance of oral literature as one of the primary sources for reconstructing history, most particularly the social history of mankind.

Untill the end of the nineteenth century , history as an academic disciplne had not come out of the monopoly of the Rankian School of historiography , who believed it to be the exclusive concern of great political personalities and their tastes and dislikes of governance.But at the end of the nineteenth century this traditional approach of history was vehemently attacked . One of the most vocal of the critics , Karl Lamprecht, denounced the German historical establishment as outdated . He instead called for a ' Collective History' which emphasised seeking concepts from a wide range of disciplines."History,"Lamprecht declared with characteristic boldness , " is a socio-psychological science."

Viewed against this background,folk-literature , which is considerd to be the true mirror of society , assumed much significance as a psycho-historical source.Historians ultimately concluded that true knowledge of the behavioural patterns of humans , their collective mentality cannot be obtained accurately unless traditions , legends , myths , proverbs , tales , riddles , and other alike forms of folk-literature are studied seriously.

The concept of Total History further widened the scope of historical research ,as it laid stress on the attitude ' to know not only the ranges and the summits but also the base of the mountains, not merely the heights and the depths of the surface but like whole continental mass[24]. In their attempt to make history 'wider and more human history', the advocates of the concept of 'Toatal History' like Turner and Robinson, Block and Febre, did all to unchain history from the shackles of political domination. This new approach to history not only broadened the spectrum of historical focus , but it also helped in acknowledging the relevance and usefulness of creative and popular literature as an important tool for providing meaning-

ful , objective and comprehensive insight into the interior depths of the human mind.

The introductions of anthropological perspective added new dimension to historical research . The fresh interest in myths and legendary tales , studies of the constructions,transient or enduring, of social mentalities for exploring historical context in literary composition can well be obtained from the remarks of Dennis Smith, the reputed historian and sociologist. He remarks:

> All things being interconnected in the intellectual movements , a re-evaluation of factors other than those which had been considerd the primary determinants in a mechanistic vision of history led to historians' shifting their attention to the more intangible aspects of collective reality such as beliefs , images , processes of opinion formation , aspirations and cultural traits . This attention extended in many directions and the new perspectives that were created undoubtedly comprise the most recent chapter in the evolution of historiography[25].

The assertion , if assessed exclusively on the basis of conventional sources is little to benefit a researcher towards understanding different processes which generally mould the social fabric of a society . The folk-literature which is the spontaneous expression of the group reactions and responses within a distinct ideological framework is sure to reveal the forces which had a role in fabricating the socio-cultural milieu of the society.

Folk-Literature as a Source of History

The urgency to study folklore and folk-literature as a source for understanding the life and the character of Kashmiris has been felt with increasing desire, first by European missionaries. The notable among those who did a pioneering work ,include among others, J.H.Knowles, G.A.Grierson,and Aurel Stein.These scholars with missionary zeal approached professional story tellers and collected good number of Kashmiri folk-tales and proverbs [26]. These collections on the one hand facilitated the job of English administrative officials

and other related categories to help in understanding the historical psyche and the character of the people , and on the other hand, it opened a new area of study for scholars to venture in. Every human activity has a social aspect. The human personality, an incredibly complicated cerebral being, highly susceptible to impressions and ardently striving for survival and self-expression, reflects in true sense the outcome of a social context; but it has been observed that in the conventional sources of history , the tacit assumptions in a given society were advertantly or inadvertently overlooked and thus the social context was neglected to a great extent. With the focus on interdisciplinary approach ,the truth of the historical situation, phenomenon or period began to be rediscovered from new relics and the traces embodied in creative and othe forms of popular literature.Commenting on the relevance of oral sources ,G.J.Rennier remarks :

Among historical traces ,along with the written traces, the oral traces no less serve as an authentic source of history. These traces , we find in human society in the form of institutions , customs of the people, religious beliefs , social doctrines, ethical principles, traditions, legends and superstitions[27].

Folk-literature ,which forms as one of the strongest and the richest medium of collective social expression, bears the imprint of all such human activities and ,therefore, it could rightly claim to be treated as one of the primary and reliable historical sources.

W.L.Warner and P.S.Lunt, defined society as a " a group of mutually interacting individuals." Contacts between individual groups and cultural communities lead to some constant interactions, which produce change. Professor Morgan Thau observes : " The pluralism of domestic groupings and conflicts tend to impress upon the participants the relativity of their interests and loyalties and thus to instigate the clashes of different groups." The study of Kashmiri proverbs and sayings brings into focus the marked social conflicts, which had a role in fashioning the social destiny of the community.

For example ,Kashmiri proverbs and sayings like :

wozli kani tsop kadun

baabi budtam ti khidmat karay
tsaliwinyan bronth ti laarivinyan pati
(Bite an apple from the red end
O, father, I wish you were too old to be looked after by me.
Take a lead when you are chased , and if you are
among the chasers, be the last in the run.)

These sayings not only reveal the group behavioural patterns of Kashmiri society, they at the same time depict the tensions and conflicts of the collective Kashmiri mind, which could be the outcome of a variety of forces which had coloured the inward canvas of Kashmiri social life. This philosophy of finding historical truth from literary compositions ,both creative and folk, has been endorsed by Vico in his publication of La *Scienza Nuova* . According to Vico ,Every piece of literature is basically a historical fact of 'the moment, the milieu and the race''[28].

The study of folklore and folk-literature increases our powers of psychological insight which is considerd to be a pre-requisite for the investigator who intend to unveil the different shades of collective human behaviour. Since literature portrays human beings in action , it therefore ,represents the truth of the moment with an artistic touch of imagination. But to have an objective understanding of the fact , as researcher needs tö exercise necessary caution . " This source of evidence," according to Perkins, " needs to be tested , refined , melted down, and alloyed with other forms of documentation to become historically usable''.[29] The folk-lore , which is now recognized as an essential element of oral history provides a kind of direct access , via memory, to the essence of past experience . It equips the researcher with the tool of memory that in turn helps in producing otherwise unreachable insights into the living processes of historical memory whether individual or social. The information derived from oral sources like folklore gets more authenticity and becomes historically valid when it is validated by more respectable evidence. The sensible souls , in the field of historical scholarship, have been conscious of the relevance and the utility of folklore as a source of history . This awareness regarding the richness of the oral sources .

promoted them to keep in sight the oral literature , along with the other historical material. Even the celebrated writer of the Rajatarangani ,Kalhana , has taken enough support from the popular lore current during his time. Commenting on the keen historical sense of Kalhana , Stein wrote:

> " It cannot be doubted that Kalhana had taken many of the legends and anecdotes so frequent in the earlier portion of his narrative , direct from the traditional lore current in his own time and not from the early writers. This is proved in numerous cases by the clearly local character of the accounts reproduced or the manner of their relation... they enable us often to trace the earlier forms of local traditions still extant in Kashmir , and always furnish interesting details bearing on the ancient topography or folklore of the Valley[30].

In sharp contrast to Kalhana's historical modality, the other chroniclers who after him continued his historical work , adopted intriguing silence towards some of the celebrated historical personalities of their time. It was the service rendered by the creators of Kashmiri folk-literature, who documented the commendable work of these forgotten personalities in their folk experessions and thereby left behind the unvarnished imprint of their contribution on the slates of the human chest. In this way, Kashmir history is highly indebted to the discipline of folklore for cementing the broken links of our rich historical heritage.

Macaulay penned a famous passage upon the nature of history which could aptly be turned into modern American phraseology.According to him ,there was no place for commoners in Gibbon's Robertson's historical realms . They left out the lonely life of the plain people, which only the historical novelist has appropriated . This assertion of Macaulay contains good amount of truth in context of Kashmirs historical legacy. Not only Kalhana , but Hassan , the distinguished historian of our times in order to ensure the chronological sequence of his historical narrative took enough help from different categories of our folk-literature . In sharp contrast to the historical narrative , in folk-literature "society",

according to Nevins, " is shown from the highest to the lowest, from the royal cloth of the state to the den of the outlaw, from throne of the legate to the chimney corner[31]" It breaks up the illimitable detail of the past into simple and comprehensible units.It is folklore which preserves , transmits and translates all that which though important in its own right has not attracted the attention of chroniclers and historians for obvious reasons as by and large history , as pointed earlier , has always been the hand-maid of the powers at the apex,with a slight variation here and there. It is this throng which kept the wheel of history moving at the cost of their sweat and blood. " Folklore ," thus according to Saqi, "is not only the expression of life , but is the life itself which one live and breaths. It is the embodiment of people's innocese nourished by their tears, It is the real spokesman of miseries, misfortunes, mirth and merry-making of masses[32].

As already mentioned that the age under review was a period of great crises and the state being aware of the magnitude of the people's discontent, it used every device to demoralize people from expressing their heart-felt feelings against the corrupt practices of the official agencies . But in spite of every exercise of official restriction, people symbolically expressed their sad plight through innumerable proverbs, folk-sayings, songs and *Bhandi peethirs*[33]. Here are a few examples:

i.bati bati pyaadi pati;
ii.*eesas kuth chhayo ti eehi path draryo*;
iii. *yed dag che bed dag*

(i. The entire produce of the peasant is a state monopoly;
ii. The illegal exaction saves the peasant fromthe official wrath;
iii. A tip to the corrupt oficials is a source of comfort.)

These proverbs not only depict the official oppression and the corrupt behavior of the rapacious revenue officials , but they reveal the imprints of the Kashmiri mentality which was the indirect outcome of the inhuman principles of governance. There are hundreds of such sayings as reflect the mood of the people and the pulse of the period.

Every piece of literature (both creative and folk) mirrors the pulse of the age in which it is produced and the saying seems equally justified when applied to the domain of popular literature of Ksshmir. There is no doubt that we find negligible references regarding the social protest or peasant revolt in our historicl literature for obvious reason. But a serious examination of Ksshmiri folk- literature in general and the *Ladi sha* [34] and *bandi peethir* in particular provide enough clues to suggest that the peasantry demonstrated their anger and protest on different occasions and the title of *zulm parast* ,as suggested by some, of course, fall short of qualification. The different *peethirs* , like *raazi peethir, derzipeethir, angrez peethir* and *gryis peethir*, though apparently look farcically humorous productions, at the bottom , these pieces of art contain strong sense of protest and satire against the corrupt and merciless system of the autocratic rule during the period of our study.

In the present study , we shall attempt with utmost care to study the pieces of Kshmiri folk-literature in conjunction with othe established historical sources. Only those literary creations are selected for scrutiny which have less imaginative appeal and effect and which offer an objective insight into the variegated aspects of Kashmiri social life. A vast mass of folk-material embodied in a number of folk-tale collections has been left out from the domain of research pursuit on the ground that the researcher , in spite of the hard efforts , could not ascertain the exact or probable periodicity of the creation and the corresponding related events. Thus an effort is made to accommodate only those literary compositions which are found in tune with the niceties of historical research.

It is with this intention that a humble attempt is made to evaluate different forms of folk-literature in order to study different facet of Kashmiri society. The study attempts to cover all shades of Kashmiri society that obtaine from 1819 to 1947. An attempt has been made in the following pages to study folk-literature not as a literary genre, but as a document and source of historical literature.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1.See peter Burke , *History and Social Theory*,p.6.Also refer Goff.Le Jcques and Nora Pierre, *Constructing the Past*, p.4.
2.L.Stone, *The Past and the Present*,1981.pp.3-5.
3.P.Burke, *New perspectives on Historical Writing* ,p223.
4. Braudel,F.*History and Sociology*,(Eng.tr.)in his *On History*,pp66-66.
5.D.C.Sharma, *Kashmir under the Sikhs*,p.270.
6.Parimu, *History of Sikh Rule in Kashmir*, p.287.
7. A gallant Dogra military official whose conquest of Ladakh extended the political influence of the Dogras well beyond the Zojilla Pass ,which connects Kashmir Valley
with Ladakh region. See Cunningham, *Ladakh*,p.218.
8. Jammu and Kashmir State came into existence in 1846 after the first Anglo-Sikh war of 1845-46 which was immediately followed by a treaty known as the Treaty of Amritsar. That concluded on 16 March,1846 authenticating Ghulab Singh's r right of being the firt ruler of the newly formed state and the title of Maharaja ; the emblem of sovereignity was eventually conferred upon him.The Treaty stipulated the formation of the new state by transferring the territories lying between the Ravi and the Indus rivers 'for ever in independent possession' ,to Gulab Singh and his natural male descendants. For his active support and cooperation that Gulab Singh renderd to further the interests of English Company during their hour of need, as an act of generosity and gratitude, they gifted away the entire territory of The Jammu and Ksshmir State to Gulab Singh against the paltry amount of seventy-five lacs of Nankshahi rupees. Iqbal, the philosopher poet of the sub-continent, lamenting the establishment of Dogra rule , bemoans :

dihqan wa k,sht wa jay wa Khayaabaan frvkhtand,
qome frokhtand wa chi arzaan frvokhtand

(Their fields, their crops, their brooks, even the peasants in the Vale;They sold , they sold all, alas! How cheap was the sale!)
See for details G.M.D.Sufi, *Kashir*, vol.2,p.768; Rashid Taseer, *Tahriqi Huriati Kashmir* (Urdu),vol.1,p.50. Also refer .K.M.Panikar, *The Founding of the Kashmir State*,p.126.It was first published under the title ; *Gulab Singh* in 130.

9. Gwasha Lal Koul, *Kashmir Then and Now*, (8th edition),p.89. See also Dilp Kumar Gosh, *Kashmir in Transition,* 1885-1893,pp.139-143.

10. It is one of the genres of Kashmiri folk-songs . The detail follows in the next chapter.

11. The most inhuman practice according to which the male members of the rural society of Kashmir were driven out forcibly from their families to work as porters to facilitate the mobility of Sikh and Dogra troops to distant hazardous spots of military strategy . See for details Ishaq Khan's essay *' Some Aspects of Corvee,'* published in Research Biannual . Also refer Robert Thrope's *Kashmir Misgovernment*,p.38.
Lawrence , *The Valley of Kashmir*,p.411.

12.Folk plays presented by the Bhands of Kashmir. The detail follows.

13. Dance based kashmiri folk-song ,generally sung on festive occasions and on other socio-religious occasions.

14. An important category of Kashmiri folk-poetry. It is generally sung on marriage occasions and other related function.

15.Ginsberg,*Sociology*,p.153.

16. Anderson and Parker ,*Society*,p.34.

17. Allan Dundes, *The Study of Folk-lore*,pp.167,243,and 261. 18. Golf and Nora (ed.) *Constructing the Past*,p.152.Also see Hellowell's *Myth,Culture and Personality*,p.548.

19.Pushp, 'Freedom in Kashmiri Verse,' in *Freedom Movement in Kashmir*, Kashmir University.

20.Burke P. and Porter,R. (ed.)*The Social History of Languages*,p.109.

21.P. Burke, *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 233-48.

22. Goff and Nora , op.cit. Introduction, Colin Lucas,p.4.

23. Quoted in *The Rise of Historical Sociology*, by Dennis Smoith,p.11.
24. Nicole Loraux ' Extending the Frontiers of History,' in *Social Science and Humanities*, pp.20-21.
25. Smith Dennis ,op.cit.,p.46.
26. Griersn and Stein, *Hatim's Tales*, Introduction, M.Y. Teng,pp.3-4.
27. Rennier, History in Purpose and Methods,p.101.
28. Quoted in *Contructing the Past,* Goff and Nora.
29. Perkin, *Uses of History*,p.12.
30. Stein, M.A. (tr.) *Rajatarangani* ,p.26.
31. Nevins , *Is History Made by Heroes ?* p. 175. See also Allan Nevins On History, Allan and Billington.
32. Gulshan M. (ed.)*Studies in Folklore*. Saqui's essay 'Kashmiri Folk Tales: Survey and Study'.
33. See explanation in the foolowing chapter.
34 See details in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

Kashmiri Folk-literature: Mirror of Kashmiri Society

In the backdrop of the latest researches carried in the field of social history, the statement of Braudel that 'all the disciplines aim at capturing the society as whole' in its totality[1] looks more genuine, plausible, and result oriented when examined from the state point of history and literature. It has been found that the popular literature of the masses documents in an unpolished way the details and the various dimensions of a society in which it had been created. In this chapter, an attempt shall be made to draw an illustration of Kashmir society (1819-1947) on the basis of its rich oral tradition.

1. Family Life

Family as the basic unit of human society has for times immemorial served as a dynamic agency to regulate the human relationship[2]. It plays a significant role in fashioning the socio-economic and religio–cultural make up of a society. Since family forms the fundamental unit of a social structure as such there can be no study of a society complete unless there is reference to the family life of society under debate. A careful study of Kashmir folk literature brings forth the unique characteristics like patterns of co-operation, social rivalry, feudal arrogance, peasant submission, clerical hegemony, peasant-artisan migration, matrimonial tensions, psycho-social insecurity and domestic conflicts. Kashmiri folk songs are replete with references to the institution of the family. Different forms of Kashmiri popular poetry, besides projecting a spectacular picture of Kashmiri family life, offers penetrating insight into the distinctive social mentality, which had been

shaped by the peculiar political environ obtaining during the period of our study. The family in context of Kashmir society not only served as a symbol of social existence but it worked as an authoritative agency to regulate the schemes rooted in Kashmiri psyche and in its ethos. Kashmiris love and unmatching fondness for a family can well be ascertained from this folk saying.

gari vandihai gari saasaa
bari nerhai ni zanh[3]

(I would like to sacrifice thousands of outdoor
comforts against single family pleasure)

In the following folk song, an average Kashmiri seeks to surrender every material happiness for his home and his family.

vandi hai zuv jan gari vandehai,
vandi hai baala paan gari vandehai,
lol chum ragi ragi vali bagraav
dhan chum sholan gari vandi hai,
ghari myon shubivin' arzath jan,
thez cham kya shaan ghari vandi hai,[4]

(I ought to sacrifice all I have for you (family)
I intend to adore you with my flesh and soul.
The love which is ingrained in my veins,
I want to share it with all.
The mud stove *(daan*) is fully ablaze,
I hold my neck majestically erect.

For the woman folk, the family holds more value than menfolk. Their activities largely remain confined within the four walls of the family. It is in no way surprising, therefore, that the family and its allied concerns remained the prominent subject in Kashmiri folk literature.

There is an abundance of material available which tends to suggest that there existed, with equal magnitude, love and hatred, cordiality and rivalry, innocence and frailty in the body politic of Kashmiri social life. For example the uncle, which stands as a substitute for father in the latters absence is often referred as pitur in Kashmiri family life. But inspite of this negative notion, there existed an inherent strength and potential in the organizational setting of the Kashmiri family

which sustained the social coherence and the familial unity of the members. That is why we find that there existed joint family system in Kashmir during the period of our study.

2. Joint Family

Kashmiri family life did not undergo a drastic change even after the mass conversion which started immediately after the disintegration of Hindu rule in Kashmir.[5] The joint family system which had gained social currency and religious sanctity in the background of Hindu religious tradition continued to remain in operation in the Valley.

A careful study of the different forms of Kashmiri popular literature reveals that during the period under reference there was a joint family system in vogue in the entire Valley of Kashmir. The songs abound in description about relation of a bride with her mother-in-law, father-in-law, *zaam* (husband's sister) *driy kaakeny* (wife of her husband's brother) d*roi* (husband's brother) *petrihihur* (husband's uncle) p*eter hash* (husband's aunt). In marriage songs particularly in *Wanvun*, all the relations referred to above are almost given in such an arrangement as suggests that their existed single source of their social sustenance .

Bab myon thazras kya shubeni
Mol myon, dyad ho zani lo
Toth myon thazras kya shubani
Mej myeny petcheny ho zani lo
Kaka lala thazras kya shubeni
Kaka dyad sorey zani lo
May tai mowath gatchi vansi poshani[6]

(With what grandeour, my grandfather adores the elevated spot in my home,
My grandmother never fails to admire my merit-she is conscious of my qualification (merit).
How elegant the spot looks, where my uncle uses to sit,
None excels my aunt in passion and love.
Let unity and love continue to sweeten our souls).

In Kashmiri family life maas (maternal aunt) and *pwof*(paternal aunt) are kept in high reverence. The two relations are always considered as great source of comfort.

That is why we find Kashmiri girls calling impatiently for the presence of *maas* and *pwof* on every auspicious or inauspicious occasion. The same feeling is expressed in this folk song.

pwaf dyad may chas wadi peereni,
masa dyad jama sherṅi chas,
khane mej kyazi chak ɒsh hareni
sag dyi haqi subheniya[7].
(How beautifully the aunt prepares her hair style,
The sister of her mother adorns her garments.
Don't shed tears, O, our beloved one,
We prey to allah for your everlasting joy)

The prevalence of joint family system during the period of our survey though found as a common rule but there are evidences that prove that in rural and urban Kashmir there existed single family system as well[8]. The peculiar features found predominantly in the striking equation in Kashmiri family life was and continue even today. For example, in the joint family system, the relations of the father's side receive extra care and respect from all members of the family and in the single family scheme, the relations of the wife's side outshine husband's relations in prestige, position and rank. In a single family, *maam* (brother of the mother) was regarded as an important source of love, compassion, care and sacrifice but to its sharp contrast, in the joint family system, it was *powaf* (fathers sister) who assumed unprecedented power, respect and position. No social scheme could be executed without her approval and prior sanction. The assertion is substantiated by the following folk verses.

pwafi chas rechimis baba maliniye,
babi chas rechmis powafi maliniye.
moj behai praran mame senzi watye
su hai chum logmut bazaar kathey.
yina vely vely baras tha[9].
(I have been brought up by *pwaf* in my grand fathers house,
She lulled and fed me with sweet milk.
O, mother, I eagerly wait for my mamaji,
I don't know who engaged him in dialogue on his way to his sisters home?

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(I have been brought up by *pwaf* in my grand fathers house,
She lulled and fed me with sweet milk.
O, mother, I eagerly wait for my mamaji,
I don't know who engaged him in dialogue on his way to his sisters home?

I wish his early arrival here so that,
I express my pain and sorrow to him).

The same feeling is expressed in the following lines also

beni zei chey karan bartal alau,
walo mama lal kotchi kharum[10].
(Your two sisters look so important, o, mamaji.
They call you to provide me the comfort of your lap).

In spite of every effort made by the elder members of the family to keep emotional bond of the family undisturbed, there are good number of references in different genres of Kashmiri folk literature which tend to suggest that some disintegrating agencies were simultaneously found at work, which intended to see that the traditional unity of the family remained exposed to incoherent and capricious exercises. See for example this folk saying.

pyitreny gei marche pipeny,
natchni beger patchine
pitur go mitchery kond,
atchne beger patchi ne[11].
(Aunt always looks in search of an opportunity to
taunt and tease.
Uncle is just like a stingy shrub
causing always trouble and torture)

According to the sources available, there existed generally three- tier family system in Kashmir during the period of our study.the single family, joint family and extended family[11.b]. The extended family was the dominant form in both rural and urban areas of Kashmir. There were number of reasons responsible for its continuance.

In Kashmir, we hardly find any evidence from folk sources which would negate the proposition that the joint family often hampered the incentive to work. Infact, the joint family structure, illustrated by number of Kashmiri folktales helped its members to undertake the hardest possible risky ventures.

2(a). Tension in the Joint Family

Different geners of Kashmiri folk literature afford graphic descriptions of constrained relations in the Kashmiri joint family system. A close examination of wanvun songs reveals

that a Kashmiri woman whose husband had died or was driven away from his home as a porter to distant places in corve expected to receive moral and emotional support at the hands of related family members, instead, we find, that she was often made subject to inhuman oppression and torture at frequent intervals, she was forcibly driven out from her husband's house. She was thus allowed to exhaust her feminine charms either in her parents home or in the home of mamaji. The magnitude of pain, experienced by such forlorn Kashmiri woman may be judged from the following folk verses.

dur malyon syir kas bavey,
myani kavai lo nata lo.
hashi noshe kerey pam pam,
soi khabar boz malineo[12].

OR

gowada kar miyonei charo, ada neyr myn sardaro,
lala vun rozium naro, goda kar myoner charo.
yavenas gom lure paro, gowada kar myonei charo,
ade ner myani sardaro[13].

(Being distant away from my parents home,
There is none, but the crow, whom I express my pain.
The news of the recurring scuffle between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law has been conveyed to my parents- how painful it is?)

OR

Console me, my lord, before you leave for distant lands!
I cannot spend even a moment without you!
The Hash and zaam are my enemies,
They leave no stone unturned to tease me.
My youth has faded out, the fire of my youth has extinguished,
My enemies: hash and zaam left no stone unturned to humiliate me.

It appears from the study of folk songs that the hash (mother in law) considered it her right to order about and scold the nosh (daughter in law).References to the conflict of hash and nosh abound in Kashmiri folk literature. Sometimes nosh after having won over her husband took the liberty to strike

equally against the teasing behaviour of the hash. This scheme of domestic situation is very aptly depicted by this Kashmiri folk saying

hash ti thez, nosh ti thez;
deg dez te vaali kus[14]

(Both mother- in- law and daughter- in- law equally claim the noble descent,
The cooking pot is about to get spoiled as no one bothers to remove it from the burning stove (*Daan)*

3. Marriage

Marriage is an institution which provides social approval or religious sanctity to the union of permissible males, and admits men and women to family life[15]. Lunderberg defines marriage as "the rules and regulations which define the rights, duties and privileges of husband and wife with respect to each other[16]. According to Horton and Hunt, "marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family[17]. The definition of H.T. Muzamdar with regard to marriage looks more plausible keeping in view the Indian tradition of marriage system. He defines marriage as a "socially sanctioned union of male and female, or as a secondary institution devised by society to sanction the union and mating of male and female, for purpose of establishing a household, entering into sex relations, procreating and providing care for the offspring"[18].

Keeping in view the pluralistic character of Kashmiri society, the institution of marriage developed and worked in Kashmir in tune with the different religious beliefs, traditions and social customs. The Hindus performed their marriage in accordance with the rules laid in the samskars, while Muslim marriage in Kashmir was equally governed by Sharia and the customary laws. But the distinctive feature of Kashmiri marriage as the folk literature suggests was and continues to be its sacredotal character under-lying social commitment[19]. It is this identical feature of Kashmiri social life that had provided additional strength to it to bear the unimaginative shocks of social onslaughts. We see that at the time of the departure of barat from in-laws' house, every parent of bride wishes for the

joyous future of their daughter in her husband's house. The parents further guide their daughters to serve the husbands relations with utmost love and care. There is a folk saying in vogue in both Kashmiri Pandits and Kashmiri Muslims with little variations which is as under:

dooli tujahakh ti arthi kedinay[20] (Hindu version)
zaenpani tujhakh te sembi kadinay[21] (Muslim version)
(You have entered in your husband's house in a decorated planquin, you should leave this house only in coffin)

Both these folk expressions reflect the inner urge of the parents to see their daughters settled comfortably and for ever in the husband's house. The following verse of a folk- song also reflects the same notion and feeling, wherein the father of the girl expresses ardent desire to see that her daughter spends the entire life in compassion and joy in her husbands house.

Sedi buthi kheermakh doli zenpaanas
Gatshi vwany paanas veetynai and
osh matai traavtam tsaaley tsaaley
keensi nai and voat maliney[22]
(With a smile on your face, I made you to sit in the Doli,
Let your destiny guide you to the everlasting good fortune.
Don't allow the tears to roll down from your eyes,
There is no option left but to say good bye to your parents' home.)

Though there were no hard and fast rules with regard to the marriageable age of the boys and the girls, but a close scrutiny of the different genres of Kashmiri folk poetry leads us to maintain that girls in Kashmir were married at a very early age[23]. This is substantiated by the text of the *Nilmtpurana* and the *Rajtarangni* as well. Though there is no direct mention regarding the exact age of marriage in our source, but one could infer from the texture of the Kashmiri language that the marriage of the girls was generally conducted at very early age. Words like *shury paan, bala pan, mur, lowakchar, baber, posh tur* are generally found in *rov* and *wanvun* in context of early marriage of Kashmiri girls. Kashmiri folk songs abound in references about the early marriage. Here are a few examoles:

duur azlan leegis baali paanay,

goosh thaavum keely mooj raavey[24].
khaani mooj eesis baabi sendi garey,
Deki loon tshoorham lokichaaray[25]
hai vesiye lokchar aasaan kyuth,
maji seety malyun baasaan kyuth[26]

(At a very tender age I was married
in a village distant away,
listen patiently,O, my mother,
my youth, my beauty will soon fade out.
In my mothers house, I used to be
the sole object of love and attention,
What changed their mind? they got me married
even before I attained maturity.
Oh, friend, tell me how cheerful it is to be young?
I was married before I could enjoy my youth!
How beautiful it looks to enjoy the kiss of a mother!)

Parallel to the folk evidences, the other literary sources also express that during the period under review, the settlement of marriage was exclusively the concern of the elder members of the family. Seldom was the consent of the girl or boy sought in the matter of selecting the life partners[27]. This scheme of organizing marriages often resulted in divorces among the Kashmiri Muslims. This sort of egoistic behaviour exhibited by family elders has often been made a subject of ridicule by our folk bards.Here are a few examples:

adi khor ade lyok go mut chotye,
ami khoti oosiway mot ye jaan[28]
khaji muri yeezaar zan chai buhri
vehri theevnam khulhas wath[29]
handis tai hunis haankal kariva,
gowdine tsheeryvo khulhas wath[30].

(The half- bald, handicapped had almost turned gray),
the insane would have proved better than him.
The bells of his trousers are so wide to look like a sack,
Please keep the option of divorce open within a year.
You tie together sheep and dog with one rope,
What a striking equation it is)!

In the process of marriage settlement little importance was attached to physical charm, economic background and the feminine attractions, instead what was generally taken care of was the physical fitness of the boy and the girl. This is testified by this folk expression.

orzu te dor koth[31]

(Health and fit limbs, that is all)

The fundimental consideration which generally governed the matrimonial contract in Kashmiri village and urban areas was that son-in-law or daughter-in-law should be in possession of extra muscular strength so that he or she could share the hard agricultural and houdehold labour in the extended family system. In Kashmiri village during the period of our survey, it was found that it was the father of the bride who bore all the expenses of marriage, but in a striking contrast in urban Kashmir, it was the father of the bridegroom, who had to bear extra expenses incurred on the marriage of their daughter. This is why we generally find daughter-in-laws moaning and wailing in rural Kashmir. The husbands family members by all purposes treated their daughter-in-laws more as a selling commodity rather than the respectable members of their family life. The detailed discussion on Kashmiri women would be separately dealt with in the next chapter under the title of "Kashmiri Women as Reflected in Folk Literature".

4. Institution of Khana damadi

Closely related to the institution of marriage in Kashmir, there existed yet another institution known as *Khana damadi*[32]. The institution, in spite of tremendous public indignation remained in operation in rural Kashmir for variety of reasons. The institution is said to have assumed alarming proportion during the Sikh rule in Kashmir. Under this system of marriage, a daughter when married was not sent to her husbands home, instead, it was the husband who had to come and settle down in his wife's home. In other words, it means a daughter whose marital curiosities are satisfied in her own parental home by her imported husband, traditionally called *khana damad*[33].

During the period under survey, it was found that the daughters in the rural social set up were generally denied the right of

inheritance from father's property. However, under this scheme of *dukh-tarti-Khaana nashin*, daughters were entitled to get their share of the landed property if their husbands lived with their father-in-laws. The sources reveal that during the Sikh period, (1819-1846) this system had become popular and the unfortunate *khana-damad* was always sent for *begar*[34]. A *dukhtari Khana Nashin*, for the purpose of inheretance is treated as a son of her father and could claim position of her father's property in exactly the same manner as any other son or sons if the property was not divided[35]. But under this scheme of social governance, the plight of *khana damad* was always sad and pathetic. He was treated as chattel or serf and was always subjected to great injustice at the hands of his father-in-law and his own wife. Commenting upon the deplorable position of *khana damad*, Walter Lawrence writes:

> If forced labour was wanted for transport the unfortunate khana damad was always sent. If he came back alive he won his bride. If he died it did not matter as the son of the house, at any rate, escaped....

At present the custom of khana damad, is very popular. It has two advantages. In the first place, the father of the girl receives a drudge who works like a slave for seven years, and in the second place, the expenses on betrothal and marriage are very small[36].

A *Khana damad* in single family could not dare to dine even in presence of his father-in-law. He was treated as an outcast in his own home. A Kashmiri proverb,

> *gar pyasthuk zaamitur gov bari pyethuk hoon,*
> (a son-in-law lives with his father-in-law, is like a dog at the outer door)stands witness to the degraded status of a *Khana damad.*

The institution of khana damad was mostly prevalent among Muslims, particularly in agricultural families. There is no evidence available in folk-lore which would suggest that the system was prevalent among the Kashmiri Pandits. However, the magnitude of the hatred expressed by Kashmiri Pandits made some scholars believe that the system was in vogue among Kashmiri pandits as well. As already stated that marriage in the valley happened to be the sole concern of

family elders. The consent of the boy or girl was seldom sought. However, parents of the boy and girl, before signing the marriage contract (nikah naama) did ask for the approval of the concerned. But it was more a formality than the intention of being governed by the religions canon. The silence of a girl was generally taken for her consent and approval. This is portrayed in this proverb:

sherif koori henz tshwapay gay aankaar

(The silence of a gentle girl means her attestation to marriage bond)

To arrange marriage, parents generally sought the services of a go- between known in local dialect as manzimyor[34]. In peasant society of Kashmir, the role of a go- between was played mostly by village elders or relatives of noble nature. In urban areas, marriages were mostly arranged by lantsh (eunuch) and aged widows. The maiden function in the series of the marriage ceremonies was known as nisheeny or naabad nisheeny (betrothal). On this day the elderly male members of the boy's side formally visit the girl's home with some presents, which generally include rwapi kery (silver bracelets), naabad-not[39] (typical ball like sugar cake) and some cash. The parties involved would take an oath to remain sincere, friendly and co-operative to each other. The oath ceremony was followed by a sumptuous feast arranged by the parents of a girl. During the intervening period between the nisheeny and khandar (marriage) parents of the boy and the girl would exchange gifts especially on *lwokiT id* (*Id-ul-fitr) beD id (Idul-zuha) Miraaj sharif* and *Urs-nabi* [Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.O.H.) birthday. During the period of our study, a marriage function was usually preceeded by an uninterrupted musical exercises and bacha nagmas[40] (dance by a beautiful boy). The day before the marriage, the side of the bridegroom would send a quantity of *menz (mehandi)* to the bride's house, and she stained her hands and feet with the red color. This function was named as *meenzi raat (mehndi raat).* On the marriage day, the bridegroom after a bath would generally visit a local *aastan* (Shrine) and would offer prayers and fateha to the dead family members. With a small party of close friends and relatives, the marriage procession accompanied by

bhands and *mashaals*[41] would proceed towards the bride's house. The entire sight of Kashmiri marriage is depicted in delightful manner in a variety of Kashmiri wanvun songs. Some of the verses which give vivid picture of a Kashmiri marriage are given as under. These verses give a word- picture of the different stages of Kashmiri marriage from betrothal to the departure of a Kashmir bride towards her husband's home.

vardan onmy lohory wanai,
gulnury wetch shahanai cha.
vardan leegith gah chak traavan,
jaaman nery elraavan chak[42].
zeeni dabi khetshi khai mas mutsiraavnei,
taarkh taam vani naav ney draey[43]
vosta kaar onimay shahri sherazai,
yino maharazo gam hekh kenh[44].
meenz laagooyo athan tai paadan,
meenzi seety khoi ha chuy shaahzaadan[45].
raji ren tsayakhi gwasul khaanas,
dowadh meej weelyzen paanas seety[46]
Vesau kor gulymyooth hes dol pariyan,
ti ruud veeryvyan taam mashhoor[47]
aastaan atshiwan salaam kerizen,
kalimai Muhammad perizem[48].
nikah chi lekhan setrey setrey,
kwonge chei petrey te atrey seety[49]
saalirav saaneu kwongi faroshaw,
logvo ronge kababan saad.[50]
wazan myol kor gevas tai tilas,
saal chui kolgamy tehsils[51].
maalinichi kunzi kar dedi havaalai,
nyer vony veryviki sawaalai[52].

(I purchased your bride suit from the Lahore market
You see, it is unmatching regally.
You have selected a secluded spot on the balcony
to set your hair in style,
on this jubilant occasion, stars of the sky have started
singing in praise of your beauty.
I have sought the services of a barber
from sheeraz, be relaxed, o, bridegroom.

We are ready to dye your hands and feet with
mehandi, dying hands and feet with mehandi had
been the privilege of crown princes in the past.
Our crown princess has entered the bathroom
to have the brides bath, she is accompanied
by lady- go- between.
When friends started presenting gifts to the bride,
people around got shocked, the story of the
expensive gifts remained in circulation for long time.
Before entering the main gate
of the neighbouring shrine, you are cautioned
to pay salute to the saintly soul.
Nikah (marriage agreement) is being written
with utmost care in the ink of saffron mixed with scent

Saffron sellers are our guests how
delicious and tasty our *wazwan* is?
The professional cook has combined oil and ghee,
the entire Kulgam Tehsil
has been invited on this auspicious occasion.
O, bride, handover the keys of your parental home
to your mother. The time has come to
say good bye to your father's home.)

5. Mangtawun *(adoption)*

Adoption under no circumstances is valid under Muslim Law. But in Kashmir, this custom is followed with same spirit and zeal as it was observed prior to the establishment of Muslim Sultanate. In Kashmir village system, community of property rather than community of religion was and continues to be the basis of association. In The Code, Sant Ram Dogra writes:

> Adoption is of Hindu origin and has been maintained among the Muhammadans in spite of all the bigoted attacks against this institution for the last six hundred years.The zamindars of the valley still think an adopted son as an heir as a real son[54].

The object of adoption among the Hindus during the period concerned was generally two-fold, to secure performance of

ones funeral rites and to preserve the continuance of ones lineage[55]. The objectives referred to above continue even today to govern the custom of adoption among the Hindus. But among the Muslim agricultural tribes of Kashmir, on the other hand, customary appointment of an heir was and is in no way governed by religious temper. It was and continues to be a purely socio-secular arrangement resorted to by a sonless owner of land in order to nominate a person to succeed him as his heir. The underlying intention of the exercise was not to obtain any religious benefit for the soul of the appointed, but to obtain a practical and temporal benefit. Under the scheme a sonless proprietor looked at the appointed heir as one who would live with him, give him company and help him in managing his land. In return of these commercial benefits, he offers the appointed heir the right of succession to his land. The right to make an appointment primarily vested in the husband. As per the folk reflections, this institution of adoption in Kashmir had a tremendous negative bearing on the social fabric of Kashmiri society. The unnatural appointment of heirs often deprived the legitimate right of natural heirs and it resulted in unimaginable crises in the Kashmiri family life. The disdain with which the society looked upon this un-Islamic exercise could best be understood from this satirical Kashmiri proverb

pwatri bwachi hon kwachi[56]

(An adopted son is just like a dog in the lap
of a sonless mother).

During the period under survey, a *heenTh* (a barren women) was put to every kind of insult. She was ill-treated and accepted as the bad omen in the family. The marriage with the barren woman often resulted in divorce in Muslim families. A barren lady was equated with an eagle as is evident from this folk saying.

haenTh geyi gaenTh[57]

(An issueless lady is just like an eagle)

6.Dress and Ornaments

Dress ,as else where, in Kashmir , was determined more by geographical necessities rather than the aesthetic urge.

Contemporary folk and creative literature, accounts of foreign travelers enable one to form a general notion of the various modes of clothing and costumes popular with the masses, landed elite and the ruling classes. Luxury, as elsewhere, here in Kashmir, had very little role to play in setting the tastes, habits and fashions of the people regarding the dress and ornaments. Kashmiri folk tales and songs give a graphic picture of the various kinds of dresses people wore during the period of our study. No doubt, in conventional historical sources, we find enough evidence regarding the dress worn by Muslim religious elite like Sayyids, Shaiks, Pirzadas. But the fashion in their dress was governed more by religious considerations rather than the distinctive socio-economic fabric of Kashmiri society[58]. The evidences gäthered tend us to suggest that the *ulama* generally followed the dress styles of upper strata of the society which include *choga, Kurta, Izar,* white *mal-mal chaders* on the shoulders and the white or green turban[59].
The aristocratic Hindus wore woolen shawls of different attractive colors. In a complete contrast to the dress worn by the *ulemas*, the dress used by Muslim Sufis and Rishis and the Hindu yogis used to be very plain, rough and simple.

(a). Dress of common people

Due to the extreme poverty, the common people could not afford to have separate dress for upper and lower portion of the body.the villagers seldom wore *izar* (trousers). They used to cover their bodies with long rough, rustic and loose local gown known as *pheran*[60]. During winter months people wore pety pheran (woolen pheran) and in summer months pheran made of rough cotton yarn was made use of. According to Hassan the custom of wearing *pheran* with wider sleeves came in vogue during the Afghan rule but the practice of using spacious trousers was the legacy of Mirza Haider Daughlat's reign. As already mentioned common Kashmiris, due to poverty, used to wear the same woolen tunic for three to four years as the economic resources could not permit the frequent change of their raiments[61].

During the auspicious occasions like marriage and other related socio-religious functions, Kashmiri women dressed

popularly known as *kasaabi*[68]. A piece of cloth was thrown over the *kasaaba* which worked as a veil to cover the entire back.

The Muslim women of well-to-do families wore slightly different type of k*asaba,* called *khowanda kasaaba* (Taller k*asaba*). The Pandit women's head-gear or head-dress was called t*ararga*. For pandit women, it was an important article of dress for the wedding day. See for example this *vigy vatsun.*
taranga puts kya chay goda telyye,
dari henz kur chak deka lesynae[69]
(The clubbed ribbon of cloth with *taranga* falls
graciously down your anklet,
You are the daughter of Dhar family,
we wish for the long life of the couple).

As stated earlier, Muslim ladies of affluent families generally wore *khowanda kasaaba*, which according to European travelers served as a sign of their superior status. Ladies with *Thowanda qasaba* were seldom seen unveiled and the *purdah* known as *burqa* was strictly observed by the ladies belonging to religious class and other well to do families. This is reflected in this Kashmiri *Rov* song also:

thwanda kasabas rwape senze stsiney,
koney woney neraan barney chaw[70].
(O, ladies of privileged families, your *kasabas*
are tagged with silver pins,
The reason of your remaining indoors rests there).

In Kashmiri village life, the section of the local traders known as *weny* was generally found of rich gestures. Keeping in tune with their wealthy prepositions, they wore the same dress as urban privileged. In summer, this class of commercial traders used spotless white trousers with narrow bells, long white *Kurteni* (cheemize) with *sadri* (*vasket*). In winter, they wore the same dress but of woolen made. They also kept plain white chadar hanging over their shoulders[71]. In a complete contrast to the village community, this class wore a cap known as *erqchin*[72] (special spherical type cap with golden embroidery work).

The dress used by Kashmiri Pandits slightly differed from their Muslim brethren. Instead of izar, which the Muslims in

towns wore, Kashmiri Pandits wore *Kutna*. It was made of white cotton during summer and in winter, it was made of local Kashmiri *Patto* (woolen cloth). In addition to this outer garment, Pandits wore a peculiar type of undergarments known as *shrane pate*. There is a Kashmiri proverb in use which runs as under:

baTas kya chu shrane patis tal,

(Every body knows what a Pandit carries under his down

A careful examination of folk literature tend us to hold that in Kashmir valley during the period under review, *Purdah* was strictly used by the ladies of Muslim religious class, ladies of well off Muslim and Hindu families and the women of Muslim Shia community. Women of skilled workers in Srinagar city also wore ordinary type of *burqa* known as *keeshur burqa*. But the women belonging to Muslim boatmen community (Hanjis) *Kander* (bakers) *Dandar*, (vegetable growers and sellers) *Gury* (milk sellers) hardly bothered about the efficacy of *purdah*. In peasant society of Kashmir, except the women- folk of Muslim Pirs, Sayyids, Babazadas, Maliks and Sheikhs, *purdah* was not maintained regularly and strictly. Women moved freely and helped their male family members both on the land and on the domestic front[73]. A Kashmiri poetry depicts the actual state of Kashmiri mind in response to the strict use of *burqa*.

burqi mutsrith haaw tai mahi tabaan
chani jalwuk swandari asi armaan[74]

(Can't you uncover your face even for a while,
we eagerly await to see your dazling face,
We have cultivated an intense desire
to have a sight of your moon like face.)

From the earliest times, Kashmiri women have been fond of long, healthy, and beautiful black hair. To ensure the health and the vitality of their hair, they used a variety of folk medicines. Long and thick black hair was considered an invaluable wealth of woman kind. There is a popular Kashmiri proverb which attests this assertion.For example:-

mas gov vas

(Hair of a lady is nothing less than that of precious ornament.)

There are hundreds of poetic verses both in creative and folk poetry of Kashmir sung in appreciation of women's hair. The mode of hair- style among Kashmiri women was also of unique fashion. It was drawn to the back of the head and dedicatedly braided, the braids were then gathered together in a single plait or plaits, which were terminated by the thick tussel (*gandapan*) which reached down to the ankles. This peculiar arrangement of hair was called *wankapan*[75]. The plaits were kept separate during the pre-martial stage while they were gathered together in a single plait and fastened with a heavy cord or tassel in the post- martial period. One of the romantic poets of the nineteenth century Kashmir, Rasul Mir praises the unique hair- style of Kashmiri women in the following *Ghazal.*

zeely waankan keely yeli laagi shumaar,
beely lagans genzranas luch tai hazaar[76.A]

(When tomorrow the plaits of your hair are put to counting,
it will take enough time to count the plaits divided in thousands and lacs).

During the months of extreme cold, Kashmiri villagers used to wear special leg- cover made of Kashmiri wool. This woolen leg cover was known as *peetav*. It was used by male villagers when they took outdoor chores to a distant place. Even very recently, during one of my field trips to Kulgam area, I had a chance to see some village elders wearing this sort of leg- wear. It was used as a folk therapy to get rid of fatigue and to counter the chill of winter.

6(b) Foot-wear

Due to availability of grass and wood in abundance coupled with scanty resources Kashmiris took recourse to simple, economic and durable type of footwear. In Srinagar and the adjacent areas, people (Hindu and Muslims)belonging to upper rung of social ladder used to wear a peculiar type of leather shoes locally known as *peezaar*[76.b]. Besides this type of shoes, there was another kind of foot-wear also in use known as *kuunsh*[77]. The common footwear referred to in our folk-sources was *pulhor*[78] or straw-sandal. Both male and female

members of village community used this kind of footwear when intended to set out on foot to any distant village, town or city. But within village boundaries, men and women used to wear wooden sandals known as *khraaw* [79](wooden clock). We find numerous references about *khraaw* in our *wanvun* songs. Here we shall give only two verses:

chaani sendi enymai khraav hen melyye,
tethy pyath chelymai khwar phelyye[80].
yezman beeyi khraav tshen khwarniy,
maalinik petshy hai poh heth aey[81].
[I managed to purchase a beautiful *khraav*
from a skilled carpenter,
I will wash your delicate feet, you
better place them on *khraav*]
(Oh, mother of the bridegroom, put the khraw
in your feet,
Your parental people have come
with a *poh* (marriage- money) and
be ready to receive them with love and warmth).

The above folk-verses indicate that *khraav* used to be an important article of footwear even on the auspicious occasion of marriage.

7. Ornaments

Kashmiri women through the ages, have exhibited a special weakness for wearing various types of ornaments and it continues even today. The women of higher strata especially the Pandit landed aristocracy, Rais Muslim families and ladies of religious classes like Sayyids, Mirs and Pirs distinguished themselves by using various designs of golden ornaments. The women of middle class satisfied their aesthetic urge by using silver ornaments. But those who could not afford them remained contented with ornaments of less costly metals or other substances like *sartal* (brass). Kashmiri folk-literature abounds in details with reference to variety of ornaments, Kashmiri women used to wear during the period under survey. In spite of being influenced by various cross-cultural currents through-out the various phases of its history, Kashmiris, true to the distinctive tradition and geographical factors did not

altogether forget to retain the local motifs present in the natural environ that surrounded the Valley. These natural objects of beauty which fascinated the artistic imagination of skilled Kashmiri artisans found its expression in various designs of their ornaments. As on different Kashmiri artifacts, so in the designs of ornaments, we find, birds, fruits, leaves, flowers, occupying prominent position. Such art motifs were often engraved on Kashmiri ornaments in a manner in which the emphasis was laid not only on consummate craftsmanship but also on index of profound feelings for nature on the part of the maker[82]. It is recorded in the contemporary accounts that Kashmiri workers excelled in the making of different ornaments, especially ear rings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, amulets, rings, rosaries, head bends and crown jewellery.

Since the age under review was one of the ugliest periods of our history, people due to intense poverty could not afford to have costly ornaments. This remained the monopoly of privileged few. Women of common folk either used ornaments made of silver or ornaments made of brass or glass. A close examination of different genres of Kashmiri folk literature led us to suggest that there existed marked difference in the shape and the style of ornaments worn by the Hindu ladies and the Muslim women.

On the basis of folklore material, we have come to know that Kashmiri women used to wear the following ornaments during the period under reference.

7(a). Ornaments of the Head and the Forehead

We find short of reference in our folk-poetry and tales regarding ornaments that were used to adore the head. But the literary sources indicate that Pandit unmarried girls used four *chandras* or replicas of full moon, sewn on the skull-cap. However, ornaments used on the forehead were worn alike by the Hindu and the Muslim women. It was called *deka tika.* This ornament was also presented as gift to the new- born babies. This is evidenced by these verses of Kashmiri *manzely beeth.*

i) dyakas pyath swana sund tiki kya gormay,
kormay dili key gooshi naav[83],

(What a beautiful *tika*, I managed to have for you,
I selected you a name with intense love and affection)
ii)dekas tika buthis nuur
guru, gur, guru, gur[84]
(With a *tika* on your forehead,
I lull you to sound sleep)

The *tika* was of three or four designs. This unique silver ornament which was tied round the head and was made of a number of cut out silver medallions fixed together like chain armour with fringes of Tiny darts falling on the forehead. The most delicate of these were shaped like fish, birds and flowers. It is because of its beauty and delicacy that a handsome girl is often equated with deka tika and there is a folk expression in circulation which runs as under:

zan chak deka tika hish
(In beauty and delicacy you look like a *deka tika*).

These verses indicate that wearing ornaments in Kashmir did not start from the time one was married but the cradle songs (*manzily beeth*) suggest that parents often gifted ornaments to the new born and the same were used to add beauty and attraction for the new babies.

The *wanvun* songs are replete with references to different kinds of hair-pins used for attractive hair-style. These clips were generally of black color. Women in rural Kashmir had a unique way of fastening their hair lock, which did not need any kind of clip to get their hair tightened. It has often been the subject of poetic fancy. For example:

zeely waankan veely mey mutsrau,
beely asi mey tambilaav[85]
(Do not unfold the loops of your curls O, love,
Your untied hair is bewitching).

In addition to this, Kashmiri women used a large number of ornamental pins in their headgear *qasaba* to look more beautiful and impressive.

7(b) Ornaments of Ears

Conscious of the nicety of ornamental balance, Kashmiri women during the age under review had developed unmatching quest for a variety of ear ornaments. These include among

other article *kaniveej*[86], (ear-rings) *jhumka* (tumbler shaped ear-rings) *bali* or *duur*,tops, *alkahor*[87], *duurihor*[88], etc. These ear-ornaments were generally made of silver, aluminium and in some cases gold according to the status and capacity of the wearer. The Hindu and the Muslim women wore ear rings of different designs and taste.

i.kanivaji: The most popular ear-ornament used here in Kashmir was the *kaniveej*. Grouped together or in some cases suspended from each other, some seven or eight ear-rings constituted one *kaniveej*. Sometimes under its heavy weight the ear-lobs would develop deep cuts. Now the use of this type of heavy ear rings has lost popularity and only the women of fishers and boatmen of Kashmir have preserved this ornamental relic of the past. Its impressive look can be imagined from this folk verse.

kanivaaji yam chak eliraavaan,
aashqan dil chak tambilaavaan[89].
(The moment you shake your ear- rings,
lovers wish to surrender their soul at your feet).

Another type of ornament for the ear was known as ii.*Jhumka*. It was worn on both sides of the ears. It was also termed as *kaniduur* in Kashmiri languages. For its balanced aesthetic look, it was generally preferred by married and unmarried women alike.Parents felt tempted to adorn the ears of girls even at their tender age with this type of ornament known as *kanadur* or *jhumaka*. This is evident from this verse of a Kashmiri *manzely beeth* (cradle song).

kanidur gariyo dwan laalan,
chita balan, chita balan[90].
(I wish to buy for you ears- bobs made of two jewls,
but you exhibit a bit patience).
kani bely

It was said to be a heavy fringed ear-ring with decoration work. It was used on some festive occasions and during marriage ceremonies.

iii. *Alkahor*. Another traditional ornament for the ear was called *alkahor*. It was connected with the help of a chain round the outer portion of the ear. The ornament had a set of two

balanced oval shaped images which remained hanging over the ear on either side of the head. It was fixed by means of a hook to the hole at the lobe of the pinna. In order to hold *alkahor* together, the ends of the *alkahor* were fastened with a cord that was fixed to the headgear with the help of ornamental safety pins. Kashmiri pandit virgins used *alkahor* in place of sacred ornament called *dejehor*.

iv.Durihor. This ornament was fashioned in a regal way to suit the taste of the ladies belonging to well to do families. It was studded with red and green stones and pearls and had a silver or golden coat. The ladies of the aristocratic families used this ornament on special occasions like marriages.

v.Dejihor.It was one of the ornaments of prime importance among Kashmiri Pandits. It symbolized the post-marriage sacred alliance between a husband and a wife. It was and still is worn by a Kashmiri Pandit lady on the eve of her marriage. It served as a managal sutra for a Kashmiri pandit lady. It was (and continues to be in tradition) made of gold and its size and weight depended on the status and position of wearer's family.

7. Ornaments for the Neck

We find enough information in Kashmiri *wanvun* songs about the ornaments used by Kashmiri women to adorn their necks. The most popular category of neck ornaments was known as *haar*. It was used both by Muslim and the Hindu ladies only after marriage. Ladies of affluent families wore *tsandan haar* made of gold but the ladies of general category often wore *tsandan haar* made of silver. A *tsandan haar* with more strings was considered to be more invaluable and a mark of high social status. Besides, *tsandan haar* (which was composed of several strings) other ornament of the same size and shape was named as *halqa band* (necklace). These neck ornaments namely *haar* or *halqaband* were studded with precious stones and were of different fashions which happened to be altogether different from one another. Before marriage, girls usually wore amulets round their necks which were known as *dolan maal*.

There was yet another ornament known as *naama* which was worn by newly married Kashmiri women. It was betal leaf

shaped pendent usually made of gold or silver. Here is an excerpt from a Kashmiri folk song *wanvun* which show the intense fondness of a Kashmiri daughter for these particular ornaments.

nama gormas rope sund hati traavas,
jan panenuy aayut vensi thavas[91]

(With intense love I managed to buy a silver nama for my sister, I assure her to gift my life, if she ever demands it)

Chhapkal. It was a unique ornament comprising of small inch-long pieces with holes at two ends. Scores of such pieces were threaded together at both ends. There were four or five such rows put together and right at the center, there were fixed together by a central medallion type piece. The edges of various cords were fastened closely together. The ornament was worn close to neck with the medallion stilling right over the center of the throat. The ends of the cords were fastened at the center of the neck. This was so attractive an ornament that the mothers often refer to the ornament to lull their babies asleep. For them it looked as a beautiful toy. This is borne out by this line of Kashmiri cradle- song.

pwafi hendi tathyo chhapkal gariyo,
kori meej lejyo ho tai ho[92].

(O, the beloved one of your aunt,I will gift you a beautiful *chapkal*, but have a sound sleep in your aunt's lap).

Another ornament which was used around neck by Kashmiri women was known as *matarmaal* (peas shaped necklace). It was usually used by the ladies of rich families but women belonging to lower income group had managed its substitute to satisfy their aesthetic impulse. In the imitation of matermal the ladies of common origin used, ornaments like as the substitutes of *matermal.*

Ledramal, tarakh mal, dolnimal, khelymal, bwakwachi mal, and many such ornaments in a necklace-pattern were designed in tune with the economic level of the common folk and the ladies belonging to this category took extreme pleasure in

wearing the above referred to ornaments. Here is a folk verse to substantiate our argument.

lolan tse dolan kemy geriy,
meli ha buz baey raajan geri[93].
(Who made such a beautiful *dolan* for you,
O bride, I have heard that these were
got made by your lonely brother).

In addition to these ornaments, we find reference of two more variation of the necklace under the name of *hatifol* and *wetsitrot.* This is further evidenced by the following lines of this Kashmiri folk song:-

vata vata rayo kwali wuzi poni,
naely trot garyo ardah pond[94].
hati chus hanga trot, meti gatshi na sana,
kya sana angrez faeshun aav[95].
(The moment water gushes down to the stream
I promise you to give a *trot* of eighteen grams)
Your neck is adorned with trot, I also aspire
to have one, look it is in imitation of English fashion)

7(d). Ornaments of Fingers

After studying almost all marriage songs, we have been led to this conclusion that there existed only two types of finger rings, one known as *envej* and *beg-vej.* An *eneveej* was designed after *yemberzal* (narcissus) flower with four or five small leaves of the same flower. It was adorned with some tiny glass pieces whose reflections dazzled the viewer's eyes in a bright sunny day. The other kind of *veej* was named as *bejveej.* It had a large circular sphere and in the center it was studded with a big precious red stone. It was further enclosed with four small *jhumer* type balls. This kind of *veej* was presented as a betrothal gift to the would-be daughter-in-law. I quote a verse from a folk song which contains reference about these two ornaments.

eneveej legith nwash kya toshaan,
begy veej wuchi kya prazlaan chas[96],
(With an *eneveej* in her finger the bride does not take
notice of anyone around,

And the reflection of her *begy vej* dazzles
the vision of the viewer).

Finger-rings constituted an essential part of the entire onamental scheme.

7(e). Ornaments for the Feet

As mentioned earlier, Kashmiri women valued ornaments more than their lives. They regarded it impolite to wear ornaments on their feet. That is why we hardly get any reference of feet ornament in our literary sources. The only ornament used for the area referred to was *gwodi kery*, an ornamental chain with ball like bells tied round the anklet. It was generally made of silver and was used only on special occasions by a section of professional singers and the,others of like taste. Our historians seem to be misled by the accounts of European travelers, who after witnessing Kashmiri professional dancers wearing the anklet-like ornament formed the opinion that feet-ornaments constituted one of the commonest articles of ornaments among Kashmiri women, *nyethi koj* (thumb ring) and *gwadi kery* were generally used by the ladies of particular section of Muslim community known as Watals. The ladies of this community acted as professional singers and dancers and their services were sought to entertain the state-guests[97]. That is why we find numereous references regarding *gwadi kery* in our *rov* songs. For example:

rwani gwadan beni lejyo,
kati oseham qarar chuyo[98].
hati hatiphol,
gwaden gowade keryye[99],
shama swanderiye vardan lag.
(How you bore the pangs of separations,
I still remember the jingling of your *gwadikery*)
The bride is wearing necklace round her neck,
how beautiful her feet look with gwadikery)
Time has come to wear a bridal suit, be ready to leave your parental home).

The commonest ornament with a sacred touch popularly known as *taaweza* was used equally by both the sexes among the Hindus and the Muslims.It was generally used to ward off

the evil eye. It was commonly put under silver amulet or copper case or put under a green or black piece of cloth. It was worn either round the neck or tied round the arm. These amulets were designed after many objects and they were named after these objects. People wore these amulets on the advice of Pirs in case of Muslims and Brahman pandits in case of Hindus. It will not be out of place to mention here that the domain of ornamental adornment was an exclusive field of the fair sex. Men folk seldom used ornaments except finger rings.

8. *Dwellings*

As in archeology, the historian, in folklore also expects information about the material aspect of life, such as economic arrangements, construction of houses, implements and tools, skill and crafts, and the people's control over national resources.

No doubt, the conventional historical sources like archeological remains, archival material, personal diaries, official records help the researcher in understanding the facets of human society and history in a systemic chronological order but the latest researches carried in the domain of historical literature have proved that without examining the source that springs from the core of society and rooted firmly in the ethos of that society, that is folklore, one cannot draw an objective picture of the different dimensions of the social life of that society. Judged against this background, an average Kashmiris urge to have his own independent dwelling from the times distant past suggest to maintain that the *gari* or *ler (*house) for Kashmiri does not only mean a material structure to house him and his family in but it symbolizes his emotional relation with the environs around and the possession of a house propposes his application to this kind of social responsibility. As a result of this intense urge and desire for a separate home an average Kashmiri prefers natural disaster over the homely discomforts. This is evident from this Kashmiri proverb.

"seere waav eesin[101]
deri waav me eesin"
(Let the natural calamity dispossess us from all,
but our dwelling must remain safe).

An indication to the same state of social urge is expressed in the following Kashmiri proverbs also:

i) gari vandehai ghara saasa beri
nerehai ne zenh[102]

ii) tsari chu beh ther pyath

i) (I prefer my small rustic cottage to thousands of big majestic mansions)

ii) (a sparrow feels safe and comfortable in her own tiny nest)

The inordinate urge of being in possession of a house is artistically portrayed in the following folk verse.

Siras sarposh gari chumna
me kabas sheri bhar chumna
yi panas vesy satar chumna
Siras sarposh gari chumna[103]

(My house provides covering to my secrets,
The front door of my house faces the direction of Kaba
O, friend my house is the garment of my body,
my house provides cover to my secrets).

References to the type of dwellings Kashmiris had during the period under survey tend us to suggest that it was the dream of every Kashmiri family to have its own home according to ones economic provisions and domestic needs.

In rural Kashmir houses were generally built of unbaked bricks, stone and wood. They were generally two to three storeys high with *keeny* and *Breer keeny* to house the necessary firewood and other related material for the use of winter months. The ground floor was almost kept for the cattle and the second storey to house the family members. The third storey was meant for storing food grains that was kept in rustic mud cylinders known as *lwapeny*[104]. These *lwapenys* were kept fixed and were not moved frequently from one place to another. It is because of its immovable placement, that in Kashmiri language, a person who remains stagnant without any work is often addressed zan *chuk lwapen* or *Tche kiyazi chuy lowapun hieu gomut*[105].

(As if you are *lowapen*-a body without soul)
or
(Why you look soulless like *lowapun)*

Keeping in tune with the geo-climatic setting, houses both in Srinagar city and villages were provided with sloping roofs, resting on walls with gable ends. The wooden rafters of the roof were covered with a layer of birch- bark over which clay was laid.

The houses of the poor had a roof with a thatched straw and also rough shingle. The roofs covered with clay would look colorful in *sont* (spring) with lilies grown on them. This is indicated from this verse of Kashmiri folksong:

range rangi posh pholy burzey pashney,
konai chava hesheney lol begran[107].
(A variety of flowers bloom on the earth covered birch bark roofs,
why don't you (girls) sing in praise of mother-in-law of my daughter)

A trap door was usually kept on the roof to provide access to the members of the family to ward off heavy snow from the roofs during the months of chilay kalan (months of extreme cold). Sometimes, these Trap doors (woga) provided easy access to thieves to break into the house, as is indicated by this song

daari kiny akho, ya akh wogey,
tsi kuso dakha kery ïhei drakh.
(May I know whether you (thief) entered
from window or trap-door,
You slipped away unnoticed after
causing much damage)

According to a European Traveler, the farm-houses in the Valley resembled the European houses of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and looked from a distance picturesque surrounded generally by the walnut, mulberry and the Chinar trees. The animals kept in the ground floor provided warmth during the chilly winter months. The inmates often liked to spend their night at *dengij* during the months of extreme cold. But spending nights at *dengij* for quite a long time with little or no exposure to open fresh air often caused lung diseases like asthama, *sila* or other like disease. In order to get rid of bad effects of wasteful material, piled often in courtyards during winter months, people would eagerly wait for sont or

spring. To the ailing and sick Kashmiris spring meant rebirth or new life. This state of Kashmiri mind is well depicted in this *Rov* song:

Sont amey deedy balinam seeri,
wande tsolomy gam balnam seeri,
guh angani wetchi moji chekrith,
di pej tai pate techelnam seri[111],
(My all ailments would vanish, spring has set in,
The winter has gone, with it, will fade
All-over miseries,
The cowdung is spread all along the cottage lawn,
O, mother, give me willow basket,
I along with my friends shall take it to the fields).

There is no denying the fact that little effort was made by the dwellers to keep their surrounding clean. We find scores of references in different travel accounts regarding the unclean surroundings of Kashmiris. But this might have been perhaps due to the abundance of snow-fall and the slippery paths which could have hampered the dewellers to lake the human and cattle waste away to the distant fields.

Both in village and in the city, people used *vageuy* (rush-mats) and slept on them. In the words of Lawrence,

"A cotton spinning wheel (Yender)- a wooden pestle (mohul) and motor (kanz) for husking the rice and few earthen pots for cooking and earthen Urns (lowapen) for storing grain were the only utensils found in every household of Kashmir."

There is an ample evidence available in our folktales which tend us to believe that in both rural and urban Kashmir, people who had some association and intimacy either with the ruling elite or official class were in possession of big and capacious houses decorated with delicate lattice work*(Pinjra kari)*. Such houses were often used as rest-houses by the touring revenue officials and other European travelers during the period of our study. In Srinagar city, the houses of wealthy karkhanadars, Muslim Rais families like Shahdad, Kheshery, Kawoosa Mattus, Naqshbhandhis Mirza's Dhars, Ganjoo and other collaborators of the raj usually stood in a majestic cue on both sides of the river Jehlum right down to the Habba Kadal

bridge. These houses were generally referred in Kashmiri literature as *mandori,* (mansions) or *Rangelari..* These houses projected the exemplary architectural uniqueness of Kashmiri skill and craft. The lattice work coupled with different shades of thin glass added to the beauty and attraction of these big mansions. Some of the structures which escaped the ravages of the time stood even today as the relics of the feudal taste and temperament. Our folk songs abound in references about these palace like mansions and there are number of expressions used in our creative literature which indirectly refer to these majestic buildings. Some of the expressions are

Enadab, Range mandori, gutchi Kuthi
Zona dabe, Prange perau, Robakhane etc. etc.

These folk expressions not only serve as a pointer to the architectural excellence of the time but it also serves as an indicator of the high aesthetic taste of the well off Kashmiri families. These houses, built on the either side of the river Jehlum or Vitasta served as the objects of great attraction for European missionaries and travelers. Some times these people expressed intense desire to stay in these beautiful houses rather then to halt in the allotted official rest houses. The architectural niceties and the beauty of these houses is versified in these lines of Kashmiri folk songs

i) Zely panjrau menzy nazr trav beli asi my tambalau,
Kama div hai angan tehav beli asi my tambalau.
ii) Ena dabi hai rovum, dediya lo,
mely sund hai osum , dediya lo.
iii) Gatchi kathi temy sund bronth Geyomy,
Teti vutchmas may Tehayan,
Be hai pata laras, veni nai amy,
namai sozces tury.
iv) Ranga kuthi karyo prange vethron[119],
tathi vele son tathi vele son.

i.Don't ignite my passion o, my beloved, you look so bewitching from the tiny holes of lattice work window).
ii.Ihave lost somewhat invaluable in a glass balcony. Could you tell me the name of a missing article?

I believe, my beloved had entered into a colorful decorated balcony.iii.I,unconsciously started follwing her shadow but I found none/What a great loss.)

iv.(If you ,beloved, ever pay visit to my house I assure you to provide a private cörner with all comforts and luxury.)

I assure you to provide a private corner with all comforts and luxury).

From the above folk verses, it may be deduced that the rich trading families, official elite and those families having close proximity with the Raj enjoyed every comfort of life. These people used to live in big majestic houses with every kind of domestic comfort which suited to the feuded tastes and liking. On the other hand majority of people lived in dungeon type houses surrounded by filth and cattle waste.

9.Food and Drinks

Food and drinks constitute as one of the most important dimension of any human society. An attentive study of the sources led us to believe that food and drinking habits of Kashmiris were generally governed by three factors, geo-climatic factor, religious factor and economic factor. Further, the literature, particularly Kashmiri folk literature present two divergent versions of the food habits of Kashmiris. In folk songs, we find abundant references about the sumptuous dishes, prepared generally on auspicious occasions like marriage and other related occasions. But in Kashmiri folktales, we come across detailed description of the dishes which constituted the major food culture of average Kashmiri. In Kashmiri wanvun songs (marriage songs) an intense desire is expressed by women folk to have an opportunity to enjoy sumptuous dishes of Kashmiri wazvan like Qarma, Rista, *Roganjosh, Kabab, Yekhni and Gowashtaba*[120], while in folktales, the characters involved demand for less expensive and self nurtured wild vegetables like *hand* (Dandelion) *Kretch* (Knapweed) *Obej* (Sorrel) *Nuner* (Common purslane) *Sowatchal* (Common mellöw) *Pamba hak* (Indian rhubarb) *0*

(Polygonum alpinum) *Header* (Mushrooms) etc and other vegetable of like nature.

A close examination of contemporary literature reveals that rice as in the past, continued to be the staple food of Kashmiris during the period under review. It was cooked in earthen and copper pots, known as *deg* or *lej*. A corresponding substitute for English saying "Face is the index of mind" runs as

bete leje chi wetchan pethe kani
(The lifting of the lid of leji (pot) tells
the actual state of cooking material)

The fondness of an average Kashmiri for rice may well be discerned from the scores of rice varieties we come across the different forms of folk songs. Similarly there are dozen of Kashmiri sayings and proverbs which contain reference to bhata (cooked rice) and the repeated description of word bhata innumerable folk expressions speak of the magnitude of Kashmiris fondness for bhata. Here I quote some of the folk sayings and proverbs which contain the expression of bhata.

a) *Bete Bete te pyade pate*[121]
b) *Bete dag aseny,*
c) *Bete bete karun,*
d) *Bete kothi aseny,*
e) *Bete betchy asun,*
f) *Bete shropeye kath chropeyyine*
g) *Bete phelyn pyon.*
a) (There is a strict vigil on very grain of rice)
b) (Scarcity of food (rice) leads to death and starvation)
c) (In a situation like
d) drought or famine, people die for a grain of rice)
e) (Rice or bhate is the only source of sustenance)
f) (To cry repeatedly for rice *(bhata)*
g) brings shame and ridicule)
h) (If you can digest a plate full of rice, (*bhata)*
i) why can't you maintain
j) the secrecy of confidential matter).
k) (Taking excessive *bhata* is a curse
l) rewarded with shame and insult)

The above cited folk expressions tend us to suggest that the rice though produced in abundance in the valley failed to feed

its producer (tiller) as it was found to be an uncommon commodity due to the restrictions imposed by the Sikh and subsequently by the Dogra rulers. The elite oriented agrarian policy followed by the Sikhs and the Dogras crippled the very existence of the tillers. They were heavily taxed, ruthlessly fleeced and mercilessly beaten by inhuman revenue officials and their local agents like muqadamas, patwaris, kardars, sozawuls and shakdars. The following passages gives the graphic picture of the food scarcity during the period under observation. "It is a strange irony of the fate that the Sikh administration exported large quantities of rice to Ladakh, Tibet, Iskardu and other parts of Central Asia, but the poor classes passed their worse days mostly on vegetables like cabbage, turnips, lettuces, pumpkins, spinach and carrots. The people who lived near lakes took *Singhara* (water nuts) as a substitute for bhata (rice)". The entire situation is portrayed in a pathetic way in this Kashmiri folk boat song:

Geri hai nero Tcharni Sarnei[125],
Kely ho sarinei che mernui lo.
Gareu setein yed chem bernei,
Kely ho sarnei che marnei ho
(Let us move friends towards lakes to search for water nuts,
We know that we are destined to die one day.
Let us fight the pangs of hunger by eating water nuts,
We know that we are destined to die one day).

The fact or the message contained in the above referred folk boat song is substantiated by Sir William Moorcroft, who visited the valley in 1823. He observed that water nuts alone formed, "almost only food of at least thirty thousand persons for five months in the year". Keeping in view its nutritious value, the Hindus of the valley usually took the bread made of singhara flour on special days when they observed fast to please their dieties[126].

Victor Jacquemont attributes the Kashmiris fondness for low caste vegetables to his utter economic poverty. He observed that "the Afghans, last century, having deprived the Mughuls of that conquest, and the Seikhs(Sikh) haven driven the Afghans from it, a general plunder followed each new

conquest; and the intervals of peace, anarchy and oppression, doing their best against labour and industry, the country is now so completely ruined that the poor cashmerians seem to be despair, and have become the most indolent of men. If one must starve, it is better to do at ones ease, than bend under the weight of labour. In Cashmere there is scarcely more chance of getting a supper for him, who tills, spins, or sows all day, than for him who being rendered desperate, sleeps all day under the shade of a tree"[127].

Even before the advent of Islam in Kashmir, the Kashmiri Pandits had developed a keen taste for meat preparations. But with the coming of the Muslims from different regions of Central Asia and Persia in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, Kashmiris food habits underwent a drastic change. The present *wazwan,* a special variety of Kashmiri *dastarkhan* is said to have been introduced in Kashmir during the Sultanate period. The dishes served in Kashmiri wazvan include among other things *methi, tabaqmaz, Deny, Rista, Kabab, Roganjosh, Qowarma, Dupeaza* and *Gowastaba.* The *wazwan* was and is generally arranged on marriage occasion and festival days. Four persons together share one bhata tram (big copper rice plate). Special type of movable wash basin known as Tashtnari is used for washing the hands before the wazwan is served to the invited guests. Such type of sumptuous dishes was and still is served on other socio-religious occasions also.

In rural Kashmir, eggs constituted as major dish of hospitality. Guests especially family pirs were often served with multiple of preparation. Fowl to an average villager was nothing less than a golden bird. This was served on special occasions to the respectable guests. The death of a fowl was mourned for days together by a Kashmiri villager. In extreme situation of economic poverty, fowl was used as an important gift item to appears corrupt officials of revenue and police administration. This is pointed by one of the scenes of Kashmiri folk play *"Raza pether*[129]*"*. In addition to this there is an important Kashmiri folk song under the title of kawaker nama, which describes the pain of an average Kashmiri villager caused by the sudden death of a fowl. For example:-

Hai koawkri lol chon amy[130]

Phah thulan thowthamy khanmy,
hai kowakri lol chon amy.
(We mourn your (fowl) death very sadly,
You remain ever alive in our memory,
You left us at the time when eggs were half hatched)

Due to peculiar geo-climatic conditions, Kashmiri developed a unique food culture, according to which Kashmiri women folk dried fresh vegetables like tomato, brinjal, turnips and other vegetables at the out set off the autumn season, and the same were used during the months of chiley kalan (severe cold). This dried up brand of vegetables was known as hokhe siyun. People enjoyed these dry vegetables during the long winter days when passages altogether remained snow bounded and when due to severe cold vegetables ceased to grow in the valley.

In the like manner, Kashmiris showed intense fondness for various categories of dry fish. The two common categories of dry fish were known as *Raza howagard,* and *peche howagard* [133]. In addition to this there was yet another kind of fish which was burnt in a grass and it was known as Fer in Kashmiri language. These categories of dry and burnt fish were generally taken during the months of severe cold. Besides, these categories of dried fish, Kashmiris enjoyed various kinds of fresh fish also. The fresh fish was usually prepared with *Dal nadru*[134] (Lotus roots of Dal lake). To make the dish more tasty and delicious, woman used to add a little piece of Kashmiri *veri* (chilly cake) to it. This is also reflected in one of Kashmiri proverbs. For example:

ferіohe shubaan ver
Cheri che shuban ther[136].
(A burnt type of fish (*fer*) is tasteless
without *veri* (chilly cake)
A sparrow looks safe on the branch of a tree)

During summer months, fish was generally avoided as according to popular belief it is fatal to take fish in during hot days. The same impression is carried in this Kashmiri folk saying:-

Harech gad te larech gunas gexi barabar cooked
(To take cooked fish in summer

is equally dangerous as poison).

Kashmiris seldom used pulses during the summer months but the same were taken in abundance during the long winter months. According to folk medicinal belief since pulses generate more heat and acidic reaction in hottest period, it therefore damages the digestive system. Therefore the terms like shuhul garm are given due weightage by average Kashmiri in the selection of their food articles.

During the months of *chiley kalan* (22nd December to Ist of March) to combat coldness people at intervals also cooked a nutritious dish known as *kretcher (khichdi)* and it was generally shared by all members of the family and some quantity of it was distributed among the neighbours as well.

Heresa[138] formed yet another winter dish of Kashmiri. There were special shops where heresa was sold. People cherished this dish in the early morning hours. People exchanged this dish as an article of gift too among themselves and gifting of *heresa* as a present was taken with great love and care.

Another food item known as *shabdeg*[139] was also in use during the period of our study. It was served on special occasions at the advice of family *Pirs* and the priests. In addition to this special type of food item, there were other food items like *teher,dwadevogri, tethily bati,* which were served particularly to small children with the intention of remaining safe from the effect of the evil spirits. These food items were generally prepared on some special occasions at the advice of family *pirs* or pandits. There was yet another type of community food known as *Sasa ras* which was prepared with collective effort. After distributing this special type of food, mass prayers were held either in the open air or in local mosques, where in people invoked the help of saints and God to lessen the effect of occurred natural calamity like flood, fire, earthquake, famine, drought and epidemics. There are number of children songs in Kashmiri folk-literature which throw immense light on these community served foods. In the following children song, boys ridicule those who fail to offer oil, ghee, firewood, rice and cash money to them children for arranging and preparing the community meal. For example

agar to agar yeth garas gagar,
harket zi harket yeath garas barkath[141].
(Let the rats damage the household goods
of those families, who refused
to contribute to the community meal),
Let God shower bounties of blessing on the inmates
of the house,who generously contributed
for the community meal.

There is another children song which is sung by the children in praise of those who come forward with generous gifts for preparing the community meal for the purpose already referred to. A line of the song runs as under

Hupa hupa dhani shupa,
Seri venytau balai dafa
Hupa hupa dhani shupa
Ya Shaikh sana ober fana
(Every family is requested to offer
enough *shalli*(unhusked rice) to prepare
the community food, with a humble heart,
we pray Allah to relieve us from
the ravages of calamity.

People invoke the aid of Sheikh Sana (a notable Muslim mystic of Iran) for stopping the torrential rains that played havoc with the standing crops).

During the times of natural calamities, which often caused destruction of standing crops, people resorted to wild vegetable and the staple food, rice was substituted by vaath[143], or yaaji[144] and other economical food items. There are famous Kashmiri proverbs zan chukh yaaji tsaapaan or yaaji chuk apravan, the first proverb is referred to a person who lacks mannerism and is devoid of behavioural decency and civility. The second proverb is used as a sarcastic remark against a person who tries to befool others. Though this type of food has been fallen in disuse now, but it formed a popular dish of commoners during the periods of natural crises ;thanks are due to the folk literature which has the credit of having preserved the reminescence of this dietary item.

Vaath, the half grinded corn was also used by common men when there occurred food scarcity due to failure or excessive

rains. Though vaath contained rich nutritious value, still it was considered to be the poorest dietary item in the food agenda of average Kashmiri. Even the bread made of wheat flour was unwillingly taken by common men as the substitute for rice. Taking of wheat floor bread (*kenka tswachi)* in place of rice was recognized as the symbol of extreme poverty and resourcelessness.

Kashmiris, as a general rule, preferred salt to sugar. Nuna chai[145] (salty tea) formed the popular drink of Kashmiris during the period of our study. There are scores of folk songs sung in praise of *Nuna chai* (salty tea). According to the literary accounts tea was imported from Sinkiang, Khoatan and other parts of Russo-Turkistan during the period of our study. It constituted chief exported item during the period under reference. According to the text of chainana, there were forty two kinds of tea, used in Kashmir. It was served in big nickeled copper *samavars*[147] and was taken twice a day. It worked no less an intoxicant for the poor Kashmiris, who groaned under the clutches of oppressive rulers. An average Kashmiris fondness for Nuna chai can be gleaned from this folk song, sung by village women when they return home from distant forests with a heavy load of firewood and the feed for their domestic cattle.

wene ayes peky peky thekith[148]
gari vetith cheme nune chai.
kathe boren treves tehetith,
ghara vetith cheme nune chai.
Kutchi peth wetch seri semith
ghara vetith cheme nune chai.

(I had gone to the distant jungle
to bring feed for the cattle and the firewood,I fully exhausted,
I am sure to get relieved of all discomfort,
If I take few cups of salty tea.
All family members are sitting together on the upper floor of the grain-store,enjoying the sips of salty tea,
I will feel relaxed, if I take few cups of salty tea).

Kashmiri villager preferred to be observed with *kahwa* (sugar tea) by his host when he visited to any near and distant relative, but in his own house, he would rarely like to have a

drink of *kehwa*. It was mostly taken on festive occasions and on other auspicious days by the common folk. The respectable families of *Pirs, Khowajas (rais)* and the Kashmiri Pandits preferred *kehwa* to an ordinary type of tea. These families often added saffron to *kehwa* to give it an additional flavour and color. Kehwa constituted an important dietary item on marriage occasions and there are number of folk songs which are sung even today in praise of *kwanga kehwa*[149]. It was generally made and served in small *samovars*.

Qanda Sharbat was another drink Kashmiris were very fond of .It was served to children on some auspicious occasions. Further during the month of *Ramdan*, the Muslims frequently took this drink keeping its energy and medicinal value. This is also attested by this verse of Kashmiri folk song.

Powafe deydi qanda sharbat chawnowukh,
Mase deyedi kowachi lalenowukh tehei.

(The sister of your father fed you with a delicious sweety drink, qanda sharbat.
The sister of your mother brought you up with care and affection in her lap).

Different varieties of anchar also constituted a popular dietary item of Kashmiri food culture. Both the Hindus and Muslims were fond of using variety of pickles, relishes (chatnis) and flavour of different kinds. In villages anchar was taken as raw but in Srinagar, it was first fried in mustard oil and then taken. Jehangir also in his memories mentions the speciality of Kashmiri pickle. According to him, "the best pickle was that of garlic", because the garlic of Kashmir was very good.

10.Pastimes and Recreation

The period under review, though, a witness to appalling heights of political oppression, the common folk true to their tradition and history adhered strictly to certain popular devices that provided the sunk and sullen Kashmiris a source for recreation and entertainment.

A careful review of folk literature reveals that during the months of extreme cold, when all passages for outdoor entertainment got paralyzed due to heavy snow fall, the only source of recreation

left for Kashmiri people was to listen the adventurous romantic tales of Arabian knights, Persian heroes and tales of legendary heroes of ancient Kashmir[151]. There were professional story-tellers whose services were sought to entertain the common folk, assembled together somewhere for the purpose. This process continued for nights together until the story or tale reached to its end. The professional story-tellers were in great demand and they were paid in both cash and kind. This perhaps may be main reason that why during the period of our study good number of Persian epics like *Shahnama* of Firdousi and other romantic tales like *Gulrez, Yousouf Zuleikha, Laila Majnun* were translated into Kashmiri language[152]. Stein, who compiled one of the prestigious collections of Kashmiri folk tales under the title of "Hatim's tales" acknowledges the proficiency of the story teller *Hatim Tilawani*[153] by name, from whom he heard these stories. Kashmiri village folk is said to forget their worries and agonies, caused by the corrupt revenue and police officials, and other exploiting agents, while being seated amid these recreational gatherings. In addition to the Persian oriented tales, local tales like *Aka nandun*[154], *Hemal Negrey*[155], *Bomber Yemberzal, Zohra Khatun* and *Hayabund* were also enjoyed by the local folk.

From the earliest times, Kashmiris had developed rich taste for theatrical performances. During the period under review, professional folk performers known as *Bhands* or Bhagats entertained people during harvest days and on the occasion of anniversaries of Sufi saints. Their humorous dramatic performances on fairs and festivals provided ample source for common folk to entertain themselves. These *bhands* performed folk plays known in Kashmiri language as *Luke Pether* in their peculiar costumes. Sources reveal that people flocked in numbers from distant places to enjoy these pethers (folk plays). These *peethers* generally served two purposes, delight and information. These plays contained seemingly source of public entertainment but inwardly these *peethers* acted as pointers towards the official bunglings, oppression of feudal lords and the exploiting nature of the Raj collaborators. The in depth study of these "*Luke Pethers*" tend us to suggest that in absence of the formal communicating agencies, these *bhands* served as

reliable informants for the "*sarkar*" by highlighting public grievances in a dramatic manner.

These blands also exposed the exploiting devices of religious classes like Muslim Pirs and Pandit Brahmans. During the course of my M.Phil. programme, when I had a chance to see Mohd. Subhan Bhagat, he revealed to me that when the *bhands* expose the machinations of any member of corrupt officialdom or other exploiting agents, people sitting around shower abuses against the dramatic actors, taking them as the real characters. The louder laughter of village folk on comedian characters looks infact, a great satire against every exploiting section of the society, he revealed. Sir Walter Lawrence while conducting settlement work in the valley found that some of the plays enacted by the Bhands clearly depicted aggression of the ruling classes, more particularly the agriculturalists. "They", states Lawrence, "relieve the sadness of village life in Kashmir."

There was another source of recreation enjoyed equally by rural and city people. It was known as *Dambali*[158]. It was a combination of dance and the demonstration of martial art. The "Dambali" was performed by a group of eight to fifteen professional *dambalis* known in vernacular as *Dambaly Faqir or Dambaly Mety*. The team of dambali performers also received with extreme warmth and welcome. People rushed to the spot from neighbouring villages to enjoy their dance sling skills. Unlike Bhands, people held them in high esteem. It was believed as the tradition goes, that the performance of *dambaly* had been blessed with the baraka of local mystic saint. There arrival in the courtyard was taken as a good omen by both men and women folk.

Another group of professional singers who were popularly known as *shairs* entertained village people particularly during harvest season. They often appeared with their rustic orchestra and began singing songs in praise of the respectable family or village elders. These *shair* are said to have been in the habit of composing their topical songs on spot. During my survey, I came across number of such shairs in Kulgam Tehsil but I was moved to see their sad plight. In view of the popularity of new means of recreation, people have lost all love and attraction for

these movable roaming entertainers. In the words of Walter Lawrence:

The shares must be distinguished from the Bhaggats for they never act. They are either minstrels who sing to the accompaniment of a guitar, or the village poets, who suddenly spring up in the midst of business and recite in a loud shrill tone the praises of the most influential person present. I knew many of these poets, and had spent many hours listening patiently to the rhymes which seemed to have no end, and which jumbled up in a very curious manner.... It is good to give these poets a few rupees, for they are often miserable poor[159].

Lari shah or *laddi shah* (minstrel poet) was yet another folk entertainer. According to Prof. Mohi-ud-din Hajini "it (*lari shah*) has proved to be source of mental consolation for the unslaved folk during the centuries past. Lari shah dressed in a peculiar costume with *dehra* (small iron rod with copper rings around it) would appear in people's courtyards both in cities and villages and started reciting his literary compositions in a peculiar impressive tune on variety of socio-political themes. He usually directed his poetic criticism against the aggressive revenue officials, religious exploiters and anti-social elements like hoarders, profiteers and black marketers. People particularly children and women folk enjoyed his artistic company. Among other things his areas of artistic focus include multiple of natural calamities like floods, fires, droughts, famines and earthquakes Kashmiri folk literature is fortunate enough to have a rich treasure of this popular genre. Some of the important pieces of lari shahas which had a long role to play in the process of public entertainment during the period under survey include among others: *Buniyil Nama; Angrez Qanon, Bata Sowaqal, Mujwaza Nama, Aba drag*[160], etc. etc.

The Urs days of venerated Sufi and Reshi saints round the year offered great opportunity for popular rejoice and pleasure. Apart from their spiritual relevance, these served as the great spots of public jubilation and recreation. In an environs conditioned by constant gloom and despair, the *Urs* days served as a recurring source of relief and consolation for otherwise grief-stricken people of Kashmir. Since there was a

self-imposed restriction on Kashmiri women to visit the Mughal gardens, the only way to enjoy the outdoor pleasure for Kashmiri women was to visit the shrines of Sufi saints on *urs* days. Besides being blessed by saints spiritual merit (as people believed) the area around the shrines was crowded with jugglers, wrestlers, *bhands* and other charm-performers, who amused people by their professional skills, wit and comic sense. The man with domesticated bear and monkey also provided enough opportunity by commoners to enjoy themselves at these social gatherings.

In Srinagar city and in major towns of the valley, *bachi nagma*[162.a] also formed as one of the major source of public jubilation. *Becha nagma* marked the chief feature of Kashmiri marriages during the period under review. People hired the services of Kashmiri folk *chakri*[162.b]*in* Singers who amused people by their musical melodies and child dance. These special musical parties were arranged particularly during the night hours. Elders, and people with *sufiana* temperament formed the major chunk of listeners and viewers.

During the period under survey, the *bacha nagma* was also arranged on festive occasions in the *Dungas* on the waters of famous Dal Lake. The institution served as an alternative for *hafiza*[163] dance which was purely a domain of feudal elite and aristocracy. This is substantiated by the remarks of Florence Parbury who says that "the natives are very fond of a *tamasha* or fete, where they wear gorgeous clothes and sprinkle scent upon each other, and in Kashmir they often celebrate great occasions by a trip on the river. On one occasion we heard the beating of drums and strains of music skimming past our house boat, and on looking out saw a boat load of men in brilliant costumes"[164].

For aristocracy and feudal elite there happened to be professional musical clubs run by male sex brokers and prostitutes. There used to be two such main centers dealing in sensual pleasure during the period under reference. One each at 'Maisuma' and Tashvan in Srinagar city[165]. In Anantnag district of Kashmir, near famous Achabal Mughal garden, there also existed such a center where a small garden is still

remembered after the name of the lady manager of that recreational center.

Among less expensive popular pastimes, mention may be made of *kowaker jang* (cock fighting) *daande ledeey* (bull fighting) and *koter vudav* (pigeon flying). Amidst political vandalism and economic distress, commoners took active participation in these outdoor pastimes. The popularity of the dande ledey can be deduced from this Kashmiri proverb.

srandan henzi ledayi manz chi gatshan
zand lete mowanji"

(In a fight between two bulls the shrubs get trodden)

Dangal (wrestling) was also one of the chief sources of public entertainment. The wrestlers often belonged to *gury* (milk seller) families. Being in possession of well physical charm and strength, wrestelers belonging to Guri families often out-shined their counterparts in the wrestling ring. In Srinagar city, according to the contemporary sources, the wrestling bouts were usually arranged in the in the idgah ground. This wrestling bout in vernacular was known as *pehlwan dabidaab*. Another equally important muscle oriented game, which constituted a popular means of public recreation was *lori jang jang*[167] (sling fighting). This folk game was played in streets and lanes. Sources reveal that during these fatal fights, dozen of rival participants would receive minor or major injuries which usually resulted in community clashes. Keeping in sight the fatal nature of the play, this game has now ceased to be the part of Kashmiri sports agenda.

It is evident from the context of the Kashmiri folk tales that from the distant times small girls in Kashmir amused themselves with variety of children's games. One such game or pastime, very popular among children was known by the name of *maharini deji* (toy bride). The toy marriage like amusing exercise is vividly depicted in this song:

hai vesiye kot sana lwakichar gov!
yi nasa phirith su mut lwakchar gov,
yaad chuyi keni gindun meharen dejen?
shube vun lowat lowat su kot lwakchar go.

(O, my friend, do you ever recall your childhood days?

I eagerly crave for its return.
Do you remember the sweet moments
when we used to play toy bride games?
How bewitching it was our childhood!;
But it faded so silently and unnoticed)

Being aware of the significance of physical fitness and mental soundness, Kashmiris amid poverty and exploitation, developed more taste for cheap sports activities rather than the big and expensive sports exercises. Their liking or less time-consuming folk games is suggestive of their busy working schedule. During the period under reference, rural people from their very childhood either worked as bonded agricultural labourers on the lands of their absentee feudal lords, or worked as born debt industrial labourers in the clumsy factories of wealthy karakhandars in Srinagar city. Under such inhuman conditions, how could Kashmiris have developed taste and liking for games of royal and elite nature. Our historians have altogether marginalized the significance and the relevance of these games and that is why there is no mention of these games in any of the historical narratives. These games help in understanding the soci-economic make-up and the aesthetic pulse of Kashmiri soviet.

The list of the folk games Kashmiris played with though very lengthy and comprehensive but here the reference may be made of only a few games played during our period of our study. These were *Eny Katar, Kath Shahey Bam, Saza long, Garm, Okus Bokus, Yendre-mohul, Ate sewery Tsoori-Tchefi Lethy kij loth, Hiketh, Samandar Giry Bacha* etc etc[169]. these games were played exclusively by small children belonging to both the sexes.

The only game referred to above which was accompanied by rustic choral singing was *Okus Bokus*. Muslim women in Kashmir observed Ramzan with redoubled social gaiety and the religious zeal. They used to come out of their dwellings after breaking the fast and assembled together to sing in melodious tunes the *Rov* songs in präise of gallant Muslim heroes and local religious saints. The bounties of Allah, the glorious deeds of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and the spiritual merits of *Sufis* and *Rishis* constituted the major content of these Rov

songs. Kashmiri women folk often used this occasion to amuse themselves in the company of neighbouring ladies. These folk melodies coupled with balanced body rhythms of Kashmiri virgins would create a romantic sight in the secredotal back drop of the Ramzan month. The month offered an outdoor exercise of enjoyment for otherwise confined Kashmiri virgins. The occasion was also used by Kashmiri women to give spontaneous expression to inner emotional feelings[170]. The month of Ramzan in Kashmir was not only observed in Kashmir as one of the fundamental duty enjoined by the Quran on believers, but it had a tremendous bearing on fear sex. About *Rov*, Walter Lawrence remarks as under:

On festive occasions, the young women danced in groups in the form of a semi circle, they sang pretty songs and their dance was graceful[171].

Though the dawn of winter (*vande*) signaled innumerable worries for an average Kashmiri, yet owing to innate impulse for joy and jubilation, they turned the very occasion of first snow fall into a recreational exercise. A fun attached to this occasion is known as *shtene sharet*. People would eagerly await for *nov shin* to befool their dear ones with the intention of getting a prize in kind of *herisa*. Vigne has referred to this amusement as the Kashmiri equivalent of making one as "April Fool".

As *Becha nagma* constituted a popular mode of public amusement, so was the musical-cum-dance feats performed by beautiful Kashmiri Ladies a great source of mental and sensual consolation for the elite and aristocratic class. The institution of *'Nautch girls'*[172] was exclusive the state monopoly during the first phase of our period of study. It had been the practice of Sikh predecessors (Afghans) to spend nights in company of the *nautch girls* enjoying their music and dance. The Sikhs converted this aesthetic exercise to sensual heights. Commenting on the sad plight of *nautch girls* Hugel Writes:

These poor creatures are doomed to a hard fate; they are not allowed either to sing or dance without permission, and if they get this, an officer of the government always accompanies them, who grasps, whatever they received.[173]

According to Jacqumont

The Sikh administrators off and on pleased and entertained their guests by arranging dancing parties in decorated boats. About Kripa Ram, the Sikh governor there is a story in circulation among the Kashmiri folk that the paddlers of his official barge were always women. They dressed themselves in red uniforms, wore *gungroes* on their ankles and these ornaments produced harmonized musical sound *shrony*[174].

It was because of this reason, says Lawrence that the Kashmiris who were expert in nickname, had given him the sobriquet of '*Kripa Shroney*'. Thus the folk expression "Kripa *Shroney*" presents the spectacular picture of the luxurious life style of the Sikh governing class.

Keeping in view the abundant water resources available in the valley in form of world renowned lakes, it was natural for Kashmiris to develop a taste for some kind of water games, but the only game we find reference to in our folk literature is the annual boating race held on Urs-i-Shahi-Hamdan at Khanqa-hi-Maula. People in great numbers flocked to the spot to enjoy the feats of professional Kashmiri boatmen known in vernacular as *henz (hanji)*. During the course of my visit to the area around the shrine, I met an aged lady,Rahti who sung for me this folk song which contains reference to this boat race; Few lines of the song are given for reference:-

Khanqah chu mele logmut,
Henzen chu bosh khotmut,
Navan chi sheran nam,
Tehe kemiya dieutnai bram.
Khanqah chu mele logmut,
Henzen chu bosh khotmut,
Vethi bheti tsalinam gam,
Tohe kemiya dieutnai bram.

(The fair or mela at Khanqah is in full bloom.
The boatmen look intoxicated with pride and passion
They are busy in repairing the decks of their boats,
Don't fell slave to their bewitching skills
The fair or mela at Khanqah is in full bloom,
The boatwomen look intoxicated with pride and passion

our all worries and anxieties would lessen while enjoying the boating feat on the banks of river Vitasta (Jehlum).

In addition to this, there were some other folk games in use during the period of our study as revealed by some elderly persons to me during the course of my survey. But I failed to find any reference regarding such games in any of the folk genre of Kashmiri. But the fact remains that these games constituted an important part of the children's sports scheme during the period under review and served as a major source of child-recreation and amusement. These games include among other activities *razi gindun* (rope-play) *juf taq* (odd and even game) *tanchi*[175] etc etc.

An attentive examination of the oral sources reveal that Kashmiris possess an innate urge for creating situations which could provide enough chance even amid unfavourable circumstances for them to amuse and delight themselves. This is evidenced by some of the folk expressions which dub Kashmiris as *seeli mety* and *eeshi mety* (amusement lover). The assertion is substantiated by the remarks made by George Forster, who visited the valley in the first half of the nineteenth century.

When a Kashmiri, even of the lowest order, finds himself in the possession of ten shillings, he looses no time in assembling his party and launching into the lake, solace himself till the last farthing is spent.

11. Fairs and Festivals

Celebrating the fairs and festivals occupied the distinct place in the social life of Kashmiris. During the period under debate, it enabled the commoners at recurring intervals to find relaxation from the miseries and exacting toil of their sullen and struggling life. The collective behaviour pattern of Kashmiris of celebrating fairs and festivals was generally governed by three important factors: religio-cultural, social and political.

Governed by a set of traditional historical canons, our historians, chroniclers and other European travelers have applied the uniform scale for examining the underlying the motive for holding different fairs and celebrating religious

festivals by Kashmiris during the period under reference. But a careful examination of different genres of Kashmiri oral literature tend us to believe that Kashmiris' intense urge to celebrate different fears and festivals almost round the year was equally conditioned by the prevailing unfavourable political conditions. As is evident that the unique political system deprived an average Kashmiri of every means to protest against the ruthless behaviour of officialdom and the favourites of the rule. Finding themselves in an atmosphere of security and solace in the shrine environs, Kashmiris, without any fear of official secret agents, placed their heart felt grievances in the durbar of the dead Sufi saints for invoking their aid and help. This is evidenced from the contemporary literary works of eminent Kashmiri Sufi poets of the period. This perhaps could have been one of reasons for an average Kashmiris fondness for celebrating these fairs and festivals. The argument is further substantiated by the fact that Kashmiris had never shown jubilation on the festivals like Baisakhi or "Nauroz", instead Shivratri, and Idd Festivals and the periodical fairs held at different Sufi and Rishi Shrines (in case of Muslims) and fair at "Khir Bhawani"[177] at Tulmul near Ganderbal by Kashmiri Pandit Community, were observed with more religious zeal and traditional social fervour and gaiety.

The period under survey was witness to the worst kind of ravages caused by recurring natural calamities like floods famines, earthquakes and fires,[178] but the innate desire of the people to find the avenues to relieve them of their pains did not deter them from celebrating these fairs and festivals. According to Walter Lawrence "Fairs held at the Shrines annually were red latter days in the dull lives of the Muslim[179]. The major religious festivals of the Muslims in Kashmir were Id-ul-Fitr, *(Lowakat Idd), Id-ul-Azha (Bed Idd), Voarsi Nabi (Id-i-Milad), Shab-i-Barat, "Shab-i-Qadar", "Meraj-u-Nabi" and Muharam.*

Lowaket Idd and *Bed Idd* constituted two major occasions of mass jubilation in Kashmir. The melodious echo of *Rov* songs by Kashmiri women in the backdrop of panoramic sites made these occasions look more colorful, romantic and majestic. For example, see these Rov songs.

Idd ayi chummy shedyyane,[180]
Ayi parav esy Qurana
OR
Esy karav qurban bed idd ayi,
Shukr khowadai shukr khowadai
(the crescent of the Idd has been sighted
Let us assemble friends-we will recite in melodious tunes the injections of the Quran)
(The *idd-ul-zuha* has come,
Let us celebrate it by slaughtering sacrificial lamb).

The sisters in their husbands' houses used to wait eagerly their brothers for presenting the idd gift in cash or in kind. On these occasions invitations were extended to sisters and their husbands by their brothers to share sumptuous meals with them immediately after the idd.

The fourteenth night of "Shaban" (8th month of Hijri calendar) observed with religious fervour by the Muslims of the valley. While men folk engaged themselves in the recitation of the Quran and other religious exercises in the local mosques, women folk took recourse to the singing of *Rov* songs, highlighting the spiritual merits of great Islamic heroes and other mystic saints. In the dead of the night, men folk visited the graves of their dead ancestors to offer Fatiah for the consolation of their souls in the eternal world. People also illuminate their houses with "Tseengy zool" to mark this festival.

In true spirit of the Quranic revelations, the Muslims of the valley in the intervening night of 26th and 27th of "Ramzan" celebrate the festival of *shabi qadar* with great religious devotion and fervour. Muslim men folk spend their whole night in the local mosques in offering special 'Ramzan prayer known as *taravij* and reciting the Quran and other religious texts. During all among the sacred night, the devotes are served with variety of sweet and salty food items like, *halwa, phirini,Sharbat* and *nuna chai* (salty tea). During the period under debate Muslim women all along the night would sing festive songs in praise of the "Ramzan" as revealed in the Quran. For example

Retan manz reth kusei jan,

Shubavun Mahi Ramzan
Yi hai os Nabi seb jan,
Shubavun Mahi Ramzan[180].
(None of the months of Muslim calendar
excels in merit to the month of Ramzan,
The truth stands that the last Nabi (P.B.U.H)
was an embodiment of unmatched decency and merit).

On Idi-Milad-u-Nabi, a prestigious religious congregation was held at the Dargah Hazratbal Shrine, which housed the sacred relic of Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H). The exhibition of the sacred relic before the devotees after five prayers a day marked the chief feature of the occasion. People both men and women flocked to 'Hazratbal' to be blessed with the sight of the sacred relic. They used to stay either in the dungas or in the houses of the local shrine attendants called "*Mujjavirs*", against the payment. People assembled, also took liberty to enjoy the boat rowing on the water of the 'Dal Lake'. In addition to these festivals, the Urs celebrations on the death or birth of the foreign or local saints and *rishis* also constituted the major means of social get together. Some of the celebrated saints on whose birthdays, fairs were held with great social fervour and religious devotion include among others: Sheikh Nur-ud-din at Tsrar, Shaik Makhdoom Hamza at Srinagar, Khanqah-i-Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani and Khanqah-i-Dastageer Sahab Khanyar. Following verses of Kashmiri folk songs present a vivid picture of these socio-religious oriented fairs held at different Sufi or Rishi Shrines.

i)Nur din sebs tes alamdars[182],
Jay yemy retnum manz tsaras.
Su hai chum tety yey beti tury larars,
Baras vomatas shana daras,
Baras vomatas shana daras.
ii)Makhdum sebum khasi letyye[183]
su chu eli shan.
Teti ber hai chi veïhy ye,
neri letiye rovy karan.
iii)Dastagir sebeni janteky tham tai[184],
num tai Rasuli khawadayes.

(Sheikh Nur-ud-din who is acknowledged by the folk as the torch bearer, selected his abode at Tsar,There is no option left to us but to rush to his shrine at Tsar.

ii) Oh, friend, have a visit to the hillock of Hari Parbat The spot is blessed with the tomb of Mukhdoom Sahab The doors are open for devotees to receive saints baraka

(Let us move collectively in a jubilant mood to visit the shrine).

iii) (The decorated wooden pillars in the shrine of Dastgir Sahab, look no less in grandeour than the pillars in heaven)

The deeds of the believers ought to be in tune with the deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H).

In the words of Arthur Neve:

> The urs days of different saintly sites formed the happiest days for sick and sullen Kashmiris therefore from all parts of the valley attended the fairs particularly those celebrated at Hazratbal[185].

At Hazratbal Shrine, during the course of the year, five or six fairs were held and on all these days, the sacred hair of the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) was displayed before viewers who would come from far-flung areas of Kashmir. Dr. Arthur presents his impressions regarding Hazratbal fair in the following words.

> There are the great days to which the people, especially women and children look keenly forward; for not only is there the display at the shrines, but the oppurnity of showing of their best clothes and jewellery and of seeing the shops of the city and making their frugal purchases. A bundle on the man's back contains few days rice and ... the wife carried a fat cock as a present to the moulavi (religious pir).

The same feeling is expressed in the following Rov song of Kashmiri language.

mele logmut chu Hazratbal lolo,
dedy ladenei dod teti bali lolo,
meele logmut chu Hazratbal bala lolo
lola praran ashiq chi didaras,
gah loluk peu bedi dala lolo,
mele logmut chu Hazratbal lolo.
(The fair at Hazratbal is in full bloom,
The ailments of the sick would be cured there,
The fair at Hazratbal had begun,
The devotees eagerly want to have the glimpse of the sacred relic,
The entire Dal Lake has been illuminated
with the light of the sacred hair).

Muharam is the first month of Muslim calendar. The great sacrifice presented by Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) on the historic desert of 'Karbala' along with some of his family members and other companions is being celebrated with a sad note by the members of the Muslim Shia community all over the Muslim world. This day as else where, in Kashmir too, was observed with great commotion by the Shia Muslims of Kashmir.

Mourning processions, and '*marsiya khwani*' marked the chief features of this Muslim sensitive festival. Contrary to the mourning gestures of the Shia people, the Sunni Muslims would make it a point to see that their children are well fed on that day. They believed that the martydom of Hazrat Hussain at Karbala was a great service to the noble cause of Islam. The same state of mind is expressed in this verse of Kashmiri folk *mersiya*:

Rete sety sag yemy diut Islamas[187],
Zu chepi tas shehzadas lo,
[He (Hussain) who offered his blood for the glory of Islam, I offer my youth for this celebrated prince] ..

During this month of 'Muhram', Kashmiri Muslims suspended all their social engagements, marriage ceremonies and other auspicious functions. The mourning processions carried by the members of Shia community through the streets of Srinagar often resulted in the outbreak of Shia-sunni

conflicts during the period of our study. Though we do not find reference to these conflicts in our folk literature but the literary sources abound in such details. The sketches of the social composition of Kashmiri society reveal that these clashes and tensions were responsible for weakening the social ties between the two Muslim communities. There hardly lasted any love between the members of the two communities during our period of study.

Kashmiri Pandits who are known for their religious and ritualistic make up celebrated a number of fairs and festivals of their own. These included among others, Shivratri, Ramanavmi, Navreh, Janam ashtami, etc.

The most celebrated festival Kashmiri Pandits observed was Shivratri, popularly known as '*Herat*'. Special religious audiences, recitation of *mantras* and the texts from the Gita marked the chief feature of this religious festival of Kashmiri Hindus. The next day following the Shivratri is termed as *salam.* On this day the Muslims would go to their Hindu friends for Herat salutation. The Hindu daughters received colourful gifts from their parents on this day. The married daughters were presented with special type of decorated Kashmiri *Kangri* as a token of love by their parents. The following folk song gives the graphic picture of occasion.

Shiv naths puza kerevey
Beai berney beniney lol,
Posh thalan shivas beruey,
Beni berney bhayan lol,
Param shivas puza kerevey.
Sone kangri rowani deshi kerney,
Bei berney beniney lol[188]
(Let us pray to shiv with love and devotion,
Sisters crave to see their brothers with shivratri gifts,
We all adore the image of lord shiva with floral offerings,
Lord Shiva blesses his devotees tonight.
Let us decorate our golden colour *kangri*
With the delicate jingling bells,
Sisters crave to see their brothers
coming with shivratri gifts).

Fish formed the necessary dietary item on this occasion. The sumptuous special food prepared on the day was generally termed as *Herat gada bata.*

Another important festival observed by Kashmiri Pandits was known by the name of 'Ramanavmi' Kashmiri Pandits, wore colourful clothes and visited number of temples dedicated to Lord Rama.

Janam Ashtami was also celebrated with religious fervour and devotion. The ceremonial procession, projecting the heroic deeds of Lord Krishna marked the special features of the festival.

Rakhi or Raksha Bhandan was another festival celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits. On this day sisters tied rakhis on the wrists of their brothers against a cash gift.

With the outset of winter all out door recreational pursuits for Kashmiris would come to a sudden halt. The major section of agricultural class and urban industrial labour would leave dwellings and children and moved to distant places of undivided Punjab to seek livelihood for the sustenance of their family members[189]. The long chilly winter nights with redoubled domestic needs and less economic resources prompted Kashmiri men and women folk to labour hard from dawn to dusk under the faded light of earthen lamps to earn the meek livelihood for their children. Weaving of blankets, mats, doing embroidery work on shawls and spinning of wheels formed the chief indoor occupations of Kashmiris during the days of *chilei kalan* (period of extreme cold). The snow frozen slippery lanes, passages and streets restricted the commoners' movements within their rustic and dwellings. With no suitable provision to let the fresh air in, Kashmiris often fell victims to variety of infectious dreaded diseases that caused great loss of life during the period under reference. Under these uncongenial climate conditions Kashmiris always craved for the arrival of '*Sont*', or '*Bahar'* (spring season). *Sont or Bahar* for an average Kashmiri was nothing less than rebirth or new life. To give a majestic ceremonial welcome to this season, Kashmiris had developed a unique scheme of mass jubilation known in the vernacular as *badam vari mela*. The fair during the period under debate was first held at the foot of the Shankeracharya

hillock on the Dal-rim and later on the venue was changed to the almond gardens situated on the southern bank of famous Nigen Lake. Kashmiri artisan class showed extra interest to celebrate this seasonal festival of Kashmir. People flocked in colourful dresses with *samovars* and mats and engaged themselves with the eating of burnt waternuts available there on the banks of the Nigen Lake. There are scores of songs in Kashmiri folk literature composed on the theme of Badam Vari Mela. For example:

phulei legmets chi Badamvari[190],
bihith bulbul chi daryen peth,
daban nazan chikya ache dari,
bihth bulbul chi daryen peth.
(Almond flower are in full bloom in badam vari,
Bulbuls are silently sitting on their window sides,
Kashmiri women look very beautiful seated
on their balconies,
Bulbuls are sitting silently on their window sides).

The most colourful national festival known as *vethi truveh* was celebrated with traditional zeal during the period. According to the Hindu tradition it was this day on which the river *vitasta* (Jehlum) found its course from 'Anantnag' to 'Baramulla'. The festival was held on the thirteenth day of the moon which according to local legend was commemorated as the source of the *vitasta* (Jehlum) was supposed to have been created by Siva. According to the ancient custom, the Jehlum in its course through the city and the chief towns was illuminated with lamps on both its banks. This festival was equally celebrated by all sections of Kashmiri society irrespective of religion, caste and community. The panoramic view is portrayed in this folk song, also.

Vethi hund agur kya nundabonei[191],
Sadav yi sir zoneye.
Tchangyen hund gäh chus shubeni,
Zoone gashe ten chus shile podmeni.
(The source of the river vitasta presents a spectacular
view,
the secret of its source has been comprehended by
saints and seers only.

The dazzling reflection of illuminating candles
presents a romantic sight.
Its body in a moon-lit night looks nothing less
than a maiden's beauty).

Another seasonal festival observed by Kashmiri Pandits was Naureh (new year day). The tradition runs that the day is observed to commemorate the drain of flooded water. Pandits used to throw ceremonial offerings in the river vitasta to please the goddess of water. Special religious audiences were held in the Hindu families to commemorate this day.

12. Customs, Rituals and Ceremonies Relating to Birth and Death

Customs, rituals and sites related to birth, death and marriage ceremonies performed by multitude of individuals in a particular social organization are primarily the folk expressions of the established set of behavioural patterns of the people conditioned by socio-religious schemes[192]. In other words, these basically refer to those folk ways that persist over relatively long periods of time so as to attain a degree of formal recognition and to be passed down from one generation to another. Borgardus define them as group accepted techniques of control that have become well established, taken for granted and are passed along from generation to generation[193]. According to Anderson and Parker, "customs are those uniform approved ways of acting we follow and which are transmitted from generation to generation by tradition and usually made effective by social approval"[194]. From the above definitions, it seems plausible to dub these practices relating to multiple of socio-religious pursuits as the biggest repository of the social heritage. These variegated practices in tradition offer on objective insight into the behavioural patterns, distinctive collective mentality and the psycho-ethical make up of a particular society.

Kashmiri folk literature presents a colourful and dramatic picture of different customs, rituals and ceremonies observed by common Kashmiris on different socio-religious occasions. Here we give a brief description of some practices referred to in our folk literature.

12(a). Customs and Ceremonies Relating to Birth among the Muslims.

In spite of Kashmiris' transition to Islam during the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the Kashmiri Muslims retained some of the age-old impressions which constituted the ceremonial scheme and calendar of Kashmiri Pandits. For example, contrary to the Quranic revelations which do not permit any discrimination on the basis of gender, in Kashmiri Muslim families, the birth of the female baby was not looked with so warmth, joy and rejoice as it was shown at the birth of a male child. This is evidenced from different Kashmiri *menzely beth* (cradle songs) which generally made male children the object of special appreciation. I have found only an insignificant number of cradle songs, which admire the beauty of a female baby. The same feeling is expressed in these cradle songs,

Zuv vendei pakh sa,
shush vendei pakh sa.
nika lalo pakh sa,
khand to nabad takhsa[195].
(How beautiful it looked, when you started walking,
I offer to sacrifice my precious life to you.
You gladly chew sugar cakes).

The same rejoicing was shown by Kashmiri Pandits at the birth of the male babies. The state of Pundit ladies happiness is depicted in this Kashmiri *manzely beth* sung by Kashmiri Pundit women.

vala vala Rajo kwali vuzi pony,
sebeni zene aav vethi vethe voni.
zaatuk lekhni aay suru gwaseni.
(With your birth, there began to flow fresh water in brooks,
your birth, my son, caused enough water to gush out from the source of river Vitasta.
A seasoned priest has come to prepare your horoscope)

Both Muslims and Hindus sought the help of an elderly skilled lady known as *daai* or *waareny* to conduct the safe

delivery of a pregnant lady. Immediately after the birth of a baby in case of the Muslim, *Azan* was aired in the air of a baby.

Kane tele baang kemiya ditsenai-?
maaman ditsnay maaman ditsnai
(Who recited azan in your ear at your birth?
It was your maternal uncle,
It was your maternal uncle).

It was customary on the part of every Kashmiri Muslim lady that she be made her deliver herself herself of her first baby in her parental home. On the seventh day after the delivery, the mother of the baby was bathed with a hot water, some herbal medicines added to it. On this day a special meal was served to the near relatives and among the close neighbours. The function was known as *Swander*.

The period of confinement varied among the Pandits and Muslims. In case of Muslims, it was observed for eleven or twelve days, but in case of Muslims, the period of confinement lasted for forty days. On the fortieth day the mother of the boy was given a hot bath and the relatives of her husband were given a sumptuous feast. Muslims regarded the women as unfit for the performance of religious duties like the daily worship during these forty days. Before extending formal invitation to the daughter-in-law to come back to her husband's house, piaw was sent to the mother of the baby, which included special Kashmiri *beekir khanies* (a kind of bread) new clothes for the baby and the mother and some cash amount of money as a delivery gift. The ceremony is portrayed in a picturesque way in this folk song.

Pyav onenei hashi tai hehran,[196]
konaii heran vasan chak.
nike chuye kwachi pheran,
lwati heran wasan chak.
(O, daughter, your father-in-law and mother-in-law have come with the pyav ,the delivery gifts,
you are stepping down cautiously to see your husband's parents.
The new born is being carried from lap to lap,
You are stepping down cautiously to see your husband's parents).

Another equally important rejoicing moment relating to birth ceremony was the first cutting of the hair known in the vernacular as *zari kaseni*. It was generally conducted at the lawns of some Sufi shrine particularly at the shrine of Nur-ud-din at Chrar or in the picturesque lawns of Hazratbal Shrine. This was an occasion of great rejoice particularly in case of a male baby.

Tsaar khasav bedidoh nikas zara kasav,
Nikas zara kasav.
Muqam khasav bedidoh, nikas zara kasav
Nikas zara kasav.
(Let us march towards Tsar ,shrine of Sheikh Nur-ud-din
The annual Urs days have begun,
We will shave the head of the new-born there.
Let us move towards 'Muqam' ,the shrine of Baba Zain-ud-din,the annual Urs days have begun,
We will shave the head of the new-born there).

In case of female children next to zare kaseni there was the ceremony of piercing the ear lobes to enable them to wear ear-rings. This was usually done between the age of four and five years. On this occasion relatives and friends were invited and entertained dinner or tea depending mostly on the status and resources of the family.

The most significant ceremony observed in case of a Muslim male child was known and is still known as khatanhal or khutna (circumcision). It is an obligatory practice according to Islamic 'Sharia' and it is a binding upon rich and poor parents to undertake the khatanhal of their male children. It was usually performed at three to eight years of child's age. It formed an occasion of great rejoicing and get-together. During the period of our study, circumcision *(Khatanhal)* was affected by professional barbers and hakeems. In the following Kashmiri folk-song, the local surgeon (barber) is being cautioned to undertake the job attentively and seriously.

Woastei karo kar khabar daeri,[197]
Sani gari chei woamed veriye.
(O, surgeon you are cautioned to be serious to your job,

Gifts await in abundance for you).

12(b). Customs and Ceremonies Relating to Birth among Kashmiri Pundits.

In a set of Hindu customs and rituals relating to birth of the child, the special ceremony observed at the post delivery stage occupied the prominent position. Few days after the delivery particularly on sowander-day, the ladies of the neighbourhood would assemble around the confined lady with a special jar like pot, filled with birch-bark and a glass full of water kept near by. While reciting certain mantras, the ladies gathered, put some pieces of birch bark in the fire-pot (kangri) and then dip it into the water. During all this course, the elderly ladies would sing in a distinctive tune and style an oldest category of folk-songs known in Kashmiri as Berze metchi hendy baeth[198], wherein the aid of the Hindu ditties was sought for the safety and the security of the new born baby and the mother. The following song intends to seek the same aid of the muse deity.

Huri raza,
Bakeshy nam[199],
Khema kerynam,
Sahayetas rozynam,
Khowash nirnam,
Shad nerynam.
Rezy esunam,
Shoq te ponson.
(I beg Hury Raja for pardon,
I am sure that he will support us at our back,
He should leave the house with a happy note.
Let his help bless us with abundance of
love and money).

The third or the fourth day of a birth, a ceremony locally known as Trui was observed. On this day a special type of food containing all nutritious ingredients like sesamum, kernels of walnuts, almonds and sugar were fried in oil and distributed among friends and relatives. The mother who till date slept on raw grassmating was allowed to use the usual bed. From sixth to eleventh day after delivery, the confined lady was to take semi-purifactory bath (first bath). On this day,

a special ceremony known as sowander was also held. Confined lady wore new clothes and the new-born was also dressed in new baby clothes.

On the eleventh day, another purifactory ceremony called *kah nether*[200] was held. Until this day the confined mother was treated as impure or untouchable. On this day she was put on special bath and the hot water used for the purpose was added with some folk medicines to give it a healing property. Well-off Hindu families also performed Havan on this day. According to a tradition, the mother of the infant was said to take five ingredients or products of the cow, cow-milk, curd, butter, ghee and calf's urine. These products were called *Pancha-caria.* Once the ceremony was over, the astrologers would cast the child's *zatuk* or horoscope.

A special get together was arranged in honour of the priest cum astrologer who was called to affect a *zutuk* for the child. This ceremony is conveyed in this baby folk song:

Zatuk lekhni av Gonaseni[201]
Vala vala rayo kowali vuzi poni.
Zatukis chi thedy balo
Ho kareyo the kero[202]

(A celebrated astrologer had been incited to prepare the zatuk (horoscope),
Your birth had affected abundance of water in the river Vitasta.
Documenting the horoscope of a new-born is not so simple a task;it needs speciality and skill,
We hold you in high reverence O, Thakur-the beautiful worshipping image).

The first hair cut of the child was an occasion of rejoice and delight particularly in case of male issue. Like Muslims of the valley, the Hindus also prefer to hold this functions outdoorsin some temple associated to their particular family deities. A perusal of the Kashmiri folk songs as sung on the occasion indicate that tha custom is very old and is said to have originated in the sutra age.

One of the most important ceremony relating to birth was and is the *Yagnopavit (mekhal* ceremony). According to the

text of the tradition it is a ceremony invested with religious sanctity and is treated as the sign of the second or spiritual birth and initiation into Hinduism. Without this the 'Brahman is not looked upon as a perfect in the caste. It constituted as one of the most important series of socio-religions ceremonies conducted in Kashmiri Pundit families. Fun, rejoice and music on the religious ceremonies marked the chief features of the occasion. Sumptuous vegetarian meals were arranged in honour of the invited guests on this occasion. According to *Samskara* it is the prime duty of the head of the family to arrange the meekhla ceremony of their child or children at the appropriate age.

Another ceremony known by the name of Vidhyaraja[203], ceremony was also held in a very learned manner. On this day, a boy or girl was guided for the first time towards educational pursuit. Any learned man of the family or a family priest was invited to initiate this exercise. Since Kashmiri Pandits were conscious of the educational merit, they left no stone unturned to guide their children to achieve new heights in the academic domain. Kashmiri cradle-songs sung by Kashmiri Pundit women bear testimony to this fact. In a big chunk of Kashmiri cradle-songs, the pandit mother usually asks blessings for child's health and education. In other forms of Pundit wanvun also, the dire desire of the parents that their children be gifted with the merit of gyan (education) is expressed so very frequently. For example:

Ved resti shiva ved vowamkaru,
Sukhdev, Te Vyas chi ved vakhnan
[Nothing excels knowledge in merit
I pray that Sukhder and Vyas (gods of learning) unfold before you my child, the treasures of knowledge]

12©.Death Ceremonies Performed by Kashmiri Muslims.

The death of any member in the Muslim family in Kashmir was mourned with wailing and loud weeping. The male members hardly expressed their sadness in words as the tragic event is attributed to the God's proposal. Male members

generally maintained gloom but dignified silence. Unlike Kashmiri Pundit ladies, Muslim ladies resorted to beating of chests, tearing of clothes and weeping loudly on the death of their dear ones. Contrary to this Kashmiri Pundit ladies recited a special category of folk song known in the vernacular as *vaan* on the death of any elderly relative. The entire gamut of Hindu rituals, customs and rites connected with death of a Hindu is expressed in a sequential manner in different Kashmiri *Vaan* songs.

Muslims of Kashmir performed ceremonies on the death of a family-members in line with the Quranic spirit and the '*sunah*'. The body is washed with luke warm water and is wrapped in a white new cloth known as *Kafan*. It is then put in a wooden box known as *Tabud* and is carried either to the mosque or a nearby spot, usually *Jinazagah*, where the special prayer known as *Jinaza* is read in a *nimaz* pose under the leadership of a local *imam* or any member of the family well versed is the Quranic text. After the burial of the dead body, the mourners come back and a simple tea prepared by the close by neighbours is served. No meal is prepared in the bereaved family for three consecutive days. During all the three days relatives and neighbours manage their meals. On the fourth day known as *Tsurium*, special prayer meeting is conducted at the grave yard, where the Quranic verses are rendered for the benefit of the deceased soul. On this day in Rural Kashmir, the bereaved family arranges a social get together and the people present are fed with a variety of local dishes. In Srinagar and adjacent areas, instead of *Tsurium*, the Muslims, generally organized function of socio-religious nature on the Friday after Friday-congregations. Muslims under the leadership of local *Molvi* offer special prayers known as *Jumma Fateh*[204]. On their return to home of the grieved family, people gathered are served with a cup of tea with special Kashmiri bread.

On the fortieth day, during the period under review a semi religious sitting under the supervision of local *imam* was held, which is known in Kashmiri language as *khatm-i-sharief*. People present, recited the Quranic verses and invoked the aid of Sufi saints for granting peace for the soul of the deceased.

12(d). Death Ceremonies of Kashmiri Pundits.

The ceremonies performed at the time of death of a Hindu were and continues to be as follows:

The body of deceased person is washed with warm water and wrapped in a piece of new cloth. A little ceremony is performed outside the house. The body is then placed on a plank and carried to the cremating ground on the shoulders of four men. This task is considered to be of a great honour, and they therefore, change places frequently when the followers are many and the journey short on the way to the cremating ground.

The funeral pyre is usually lighted by the son of the dead. The cremation is performed by a Kashmiri Muslim called *kaavij* against payment in cash as well as in kind. The bones which are not consumed by the fire are, two days latter, brought to the home and left in a hole in the wall until the day of *ganga ashtami*, when they are taken by the eldest son to the holy lake under the mountain Harmukh and cast in.

For ten days the house of the deceased is regarded as unclean and no one takes food from the kitchen of the bereaved. On the tenth day a special ceremony is performed on the river- bank, water is sprinkled and balls of rice are offered. On this day the eldest son has to shave his beard and head. At the end of the ten days of active mourning the son or the sons of the deceased receive new dresses from his or their fathers-in-law, which they put on. As they approach the house, the mourners queue themselves in two parallel opposite lines and the elder son of the deceased enters his house passing through the standing queue of the mourners. The mourners then take their leave. Like birth or marriage in a Hindu family, death is also regulated by multiple of ceremonies. A special category of mourning Kashmiri songs *Vaan* (associated with Kashmiri Pandits only) documents the entire set of Hindu ceremonies celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits on the death of their dear ones. In the words of pearce Gervis "death to the orthodox Hindu has no fears for he believes in reincarnation; there is but the sorrow at parting from his loved ones, and generally parents shower all their love on their children whom they seldom seem to scold

when young, husband and wife in an arranged marriage being only bound by them".

Among Muslims, *Pirs* or *Mullahs* who were called to conduct the different socio-religious ceremonies had adopted number of innovative devices to fleece the ignorant and superstitious Kashmiri Muslims. Their corrupt practices during the period under reference have been portrayed by the nineteenth century famous Kashmiri poet Maqbool Shah Kralwari in his poem entitled "Pir Nama". For example:

Chi nahaq kerymety pire navan[205],
Chi gumrah pana woth kas vante havan.
Vechun kuni jayi yowad piumut bemara,
Paran Hamda zi lowag zalas Shikara.
(They (pirs) feel proud of their rich pedigree,
How a misled person is expected to act as leader?
If by chance they catch sight of a sick person,
They feel pleased that a prey has been caught in net).

Even at present there are some folk saying which are indicative of the corrupt practices of the two religious classes-Pirs or gors. For rxample.

Pirs che ponsech zir ,
OR
Gor chu ponses lor.

Both these expressions contain the same meaning that Pir and *gor* know how to grab money. Oral sources reveal that Pirs and Gors were given lavish gifts in cash and in kind for conducting variety of ceremonies referred to in the foregoing pages. This is also suggested from the folk song in which the machinations of the Pundit *Gors* are made subject of ridicule and indignation.

Gors zangan legith nor,
Nenun piyomut tas chui tor[206]
Marnas zenes asan lor,
Khei khei tchotnas vowadani, chor.
(Dressed in a tight/trouser,
the *Gor* (priest) is always found in search
of an event or occasion that promises him
sumptuous feast and cash reward.
Death or birth provides him

equal chance to earn money,
Yes, it is the over-diet that caused him
an intestinal disorder).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1.
2. Quoted by Peter Burke *History and social theory*, p.16.
3. Davis, Kingsley, *Human Society*, p.397.
4. Nazir,Ghulam Nabi,*Keshir Dapety*, p.207, Atish, G.N.*Kashmiri Folk Songs*, Vol.9, p.87.
5. This folk song was sung to me by Zoona of Pohu, Pulwama (unpublished).
6. P.N.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasta*, P.Bamzai, *History of Kashmir*,
7. During any field survey, this song was recited to me by Azi, an aged lady at Palhalan Pattan.
8. M.L.Saqi, *Kashmiri Folk Songs*, Vol.3, p.128.
9. Dost Muhammad and A.Salam, *Kashmiri Family Life* unpublished paper.
10. M.L.Saqi, *Kashmiri Folk Songs*, Vol.11, p.54.
11. Unpublished folk song gathered from a young lady named Amina from Chadura, Panzan.
10(a). Saqi, M.L Op.Cit. Vol.4, p.128.
12. Dost Muhammad and Salam, *Op.Cit.*
13. G.N.Atish, *Kashmiri Folk Songs*, (Kashmir) Vol.VIII pp.120-121.
14. *Ibid.*, p.128.
15. Nazir,*keeshiry dapity*, p.98.
16. Lundberg, *Sociology*, p.133.
17. *Ibid.*, p.133.
18. Horton and Hunt, *Sociology*, p.216.
19. H.T.Muzumdar, *Grammar of Sociology*, p.582.
20. Farooq Fayaz, "Women in Kashmiri Folklore", paper presented in National Seminar Organised by Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir.
21. This is a common folk expression addressed by parents to their daughters at the time of their departure.
22. This folk saying carries the same meaning but the diction varies as the two are uttered by people belonging to two different communities Hindus and the Muslims respectively.

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23. Saqi, *Op.Cit*.p.335.
24. In almost all *Wanvun* songs (marriage songs) we find an undertone of protest against the family elders for getting the girls married at a tender age. Also see *Kashmir Under the Sikhs*, D.C.Sharma, p.62.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasa,* pp.212-215.
25. These songs I collected from a lady at Bandipora. But she refused to reveal her name for the reasons best known to her.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. Gathered from oral recordings of different eminent personalities, preserved in the Radio archives of Radio Kashmir Srinagar.
29. Saqi, *Op.Cit.*,p.242.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*
32. In a male dominated society, the daughter-in-law was required to perform multiple of domestic assignments from dawn to dusk. Hence, through investigations were made regarding the health of the supposed daughter-in-laws.
33. *Khana damad* or resident son-in-law is a man who marries the daughter of a proprietor and instead of taking the girl away to his own house, lives on with her in her father's house, performing services for him (father-in-law) and helping to manage his property. His wife is called *khana nashin* daughter. For details see Ganjoo, N.K., *Customary Law of Kashmir*. Also refer A.A. Hussain *Customary Succession Among Muslims*, p.175.
34. *Ibid.*, p.178.
35. Walter Lawrence,*Valley of Kashmir*, p.267. For details see "Some Aspects of Corve", M.I.Khan, paper published in Research Bi-annual also see M.S.Bhagat *Koshur Luka Theatre*, pp.42-43.
36. A.A.Ahanger. *Op.Cit*.178.
37. Lawrence, *Op.Cit.*, p.167.
38. J.H.Knowls, *A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings*, p.167. Nazir, *Keshir Depety*, p.165.

39. In Kashmir, a go-between known as *manzimyor* arranges marriage of the boys and girls. This role is generally performed either by an aged lady or elderly person or by eunuchs. Their role usually ends when the couple gets married. According to Lawrence, "the *manzimyors* most lucrative work consists in bringing off matches between wealthy parvenus and old decayed families", Valley, p.261.
40. It symbolises the every pleasing occasion. It is ball shaped sugar object which is regarded as a good omen for every plausible act. It is frequently exchanged through *manzimyor* between the two contracting parties.
41. *Bacha nagma* (dance performed by a beautiful boy) is said to have originated during the Afghan rule in Kshmir (1753-1819). It acted as one of the important recreational means during the period of our study. During the Sikh period the institution reached to its height (1819-1846).
42. It marked the part of the marriage procession. During the night the lighted *mashaliys* presented spectacular view and yhe marriage procession would look more impressive and majestic.
43. G.N.Atish, *Keshir Luka Beth*, Vol.IX, p.87.
44. G.N.Atish, *Keshir Luka Beth*, Vol.VIII, pp.167-177.
45. Pardesi, Sadhu, *Keshir Luka Beth*, Vol.VII. pp.165-177.
46. *Koshur khander Gewun*, Cultural Academy pp.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Saqi, *Op.Cit.* p.96.
52. Josher, R.L. *Keshir Luka Beth*, (Kashmiri Folk Songs) Vol.X.p.87.3.
53. Shad, Ramzan,*keeshren luki beetan hund intkhab*, p.107.
54. Even after mass conversion to Islam during fourteenth and fifteenth century, Kashmiri Muslims Continued to retain certain age-old Hindu customs and the custom of adoption is one among such customs. According to Hindu mythology, the spirit of a dead person remains restless for

23. Saqi, *Op.Cit*.p.335.
24. In almost all *Wanvun* songs (marriage songs) we find an undertone of protest against the family elders for getting the girls married at a tender age. Also see *Kashmir Under the Sikhs*, D.C.Sharma, p.62.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasa,* pp.212-215.
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50. Ibid.
51. Saqi, *Op.Cit*. p.96.
52. Josher, R.L. *Keshir Luka Beth*, (Kashmiri Folk Songs) Vol.X.p.87.3.
53. Shad, Ramzan,*keeshren luki beetan hund intkhab*, p.107.
54. Even after mass conversion to Islam during fourteenth and fifteenth century, Kashmiri Muslims Continued to retain certain age-old Hindu customs and the custom of adoption is one among such customs. According to Hindu mythology, the spirit of a dead person remains restless for

some days round his worldly belongings till it is liberated from this state by the offer of funeral cakes and libations of water. But this offer and libations must come from the hands of a son, son's son, son's son's son. If there is none of them, the spirit either goes to hell or becomes a ghost. Hence it is presumed that "there is no heavenly region for a sonless man and heaven awaits not one destitute of a son (*vaisistha*) Bhatnagar, 93.

54. Sant, Ram Dogra, *Code*, 9.
55. Ganjoo, *Op.Cit.*,p.139.
56. Nazir, *Op.Cit.*, p.351.
57. A barren lady was always subject to ridicule.
58. Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.105.
59. Moorcraft, William, *Travels*, Part III, p.326. For further detailsseeStein,A.Tr.vol.1.123.
60. The tunic or the gown locally known as *Pheran* is said to be the contraction of Persian word *Pirahan*. The long loose *pheran* with large and wide sleeves covers the whole body down to the ankles. Jehangir in his *Memoirs* has not used the word *Pheran* but the details he has given about the kind of dress refer a dress like *Pheran*. Victor Jacquemont names it as kurta. According to him it is a clock type wear very common among Kashmiris. See for reference *Various Trades in Kashmir*, Op.Cit.1684. Victor Jacquemont *Letters*, p.237, Mooraraft, *Travels*, Part III pp.328-347. Dhar, S.N, *Folk Tales of Kashmir*, p.6 Lawrence, Walter, *Op.Cit.* p.251.
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63. Moorcraft, *Travels*, part III, p.378.

64. *Lari Shah* was presented by Farooq Ahmad of Bumai Village of Sopore. (unpublished)

65. Gwosh Lal Koul, *Kashmir through the Ages*, p.249.

66(a).Torrens, H.D., Op.Cit, p.310.

66(b).The folk Song was revealed to me by one 'Rasul' of Nulai viliage, falling in Shupian Tehsil of Kashmir.

67. It has fallen in disuse now. For details see *Son Adab,* Cultural Academy *Kasheer Number*.

68. It was a woolen skull-cap of crimson colour along with a red fillet on the forehead. The wider part of the cap was attached with a triangular piece of the winter stiff falling on the back and thereby concealing much of the hair. The *Qasaba* was generally made of Alvan cloth which was taken round in turns on 'Takani' attached with innumerable safety pins. The long *putsh* which falls down to the lower back is also attached with back portion of Qasaba with the help of the pins. *Qasaba* was of two types *Bon Qasaba* and *Thond or Thod Qasaba*.

69. In place of *Qasaba*, the head-dress worn by Kashmiri Pundit women was known as *taranga*. It was just like *Qasaba* but with certain modification.

70. Since the ladies of the upper strata of Kashmiri society maintained strict *purdah,* they are told by the women folk to shun *pardah* and take part in the *Rov* (festival) songs.

71. Vigne, *Travels*, Vol.II, p.140.

72. A type of cap quite distinct from ordinary *Beli* topi worn by village folk. Unlike the cap worn by villagers that was pointed at the top, this cap was spherical in shape. It looked more beautiful as it contained delicate golden embroidery work.

73. *Various Trades of Kashmir*, Op.Cit. Add.1708, 1741 and 1742. See also *Tales of Kashmir,* Dhar, S.N. p.119.

74. In our creative literature also, we find references to *Burqa*.

75. It was the unique way of maintaining the hairstyle adopted by Kashmiri women. See Vigne, G.T, *Op.Cit.*, Vol.II, p.143. Also refer various *Trades in Kashmir*, Op.Cit., 1617,1618,1692.

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76(a) It is a famous verse of nineteenth century Kashmir romantic poet Rasul Mir.

76(b).Moorcraft, William, "Travels", Part III, p.328. For details see *Son Adab*, Kashmir Number, Cultural Academy.

77. It was inferior to *Pezar*, it was generally worn by commoners-Refer *Son Adab*, Kasmir Number, Cultural Academy.

78. It was a footwear used particularly during winter. It was made from dry paddy grass. Since it was less expensive and to avoid slip on frozen icy passages, villagers used it more commonly than the city people. But while coming to Srinagar it was removed even by the villagers at the entry point to Srinagar. There is a place in Nowgam area which is still known as *Pulhery* stop. During my survey I was told there that the villagers who were on their way to Srinagar city, would change their grass *chapels (pulhory)* here and that is why this particular spot is known as *Pulhery* stop. See also Lawrence, *Valley*, Op.Cit., p.251.

79. It was slipper type wooden footwear. There were two types of *khraav*, *Khrav* and *Khravehor*. It was used both by men and women. Also refer Dhar, S.N. *Tales of Kashmir*., p.85. *Son Adab*, Kashmir Number, Cultural Academy. *'Khravas'* were generally prepared from the willow wood. Also see Moorcraft, William, *Travels*, part III, p.328. *Various Trades in Kashmir*, Op.Cit., p.1742.

80. This song was revealed to me by Mala ded of Bhagati Kanipora village of Chadora Tehsil also see Saqi, M.L. *Luke Beth* (Folk Songs) Vol. IV, p.196.

81. Sadhu, Pardesi, *Keshir Luka Beth* (Folk Songs) Vol. 7, p.86.

82. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis entitled *Social Conditions in Kashmir* (1846-1947) by Parven Akhtar.

83. It was popular forehead ornament worn by Kashmir married women. It was generally designed in the shape of almond. Saqi, M.L. *Op.Cit*., p.76. Also refer *History of Kashmir*, P.N.K. Bamzai, p.343.

84. Saqi, *Op.Cit*., p.38.

85. Poetic creation of a contemporary romantic poet.

86. See details in the thesis.
87. See details in the thesis at hand.
88. See detail in the thesis at hand.
89. This song was revealed to one me by an aged lady Fazy, of Chattabal Srinagar.
90. Saqi, *Folk Songs*, (Kashmir) Vol. III. P.33.
91. Unpublished Songs, Collected from Nishat Brain.
92. It is a cradle song (*manzeli beth*) we find reference of ornaments in different cradle songs. This indicates that besides having the ornamental value, these might have been used as an object of attraction and pleasure for infant babies.
93. Saqi, *Op.Cit.*, p.84.
94. Ibid., p.41.
95. Ibid., p.139.
96. Song was sung for me by Aisha of Natipora Srinagar. (unpublished).
97. G.T.Vigne, *Travels*, Vol. II, p.144.
98. Saqi, Op.Cit., 23. V.III.
99. Saqi, Op.Cit., Vol. III. P.200.
100. It was used to ward off the evil eye. Sometimes, if made of silver, it worked as an ornamental piece also. The *tawiza* was known by different names such as Hanji Taweeza, Rowani, Bowakwachi Cheli Taweza and *Chakor Taweza*. For details see Bhan, J.L and Rufai Riyaz- Guide to the Exhibition or rare manuscripts. 1987. *Gazetter of Kashmir and Ladakh,* p.472.
101. Nazir, *Kashir Depety* (Folk saying of Kashmir) p.168.
102. Gulshan Majeed, (ed) *Folklore Studies*, p.196.
103. The song was revealed to me by famous Kashmiri folk singer Gulam Muhammad Dar of Suthu Baghwanpora, Bar Bar Shah Srinagar (unpublished).
104. Cylinder type mud pot in which husked Shali was stored for daily use.
105. It was not moved frequently from one place to another. Therefore a statue type person is often referred to as *lowapen.*

106. Lawrence, *Valley*, Op.Cit., p.249. Wake field, Vigne, G.T. *Travels*, Vol.I, p.271. Hugal Baron, Charles Von, Op.Cit., p.159.
107. During my fieldwork I collected this song from Padderpora Shopian. A lady whom I had a chance to see on the road leading to Kulgam revealed this song to me on my insistence.
108. The period of extreme cold in the Valley starting from 21st of December and it lasts till March Ist. During this period snow gets frozen and the people remain almost indoors.
109. A trap door was usually there on the roof to ward off the snow in winter. Vigne, *Op.Cit.*, Vol. I, p.270.
110. On the ground floor the sheep and cattle are penned, and sometimes the sheep are crowded into a wooden locker known as the *dangij*, where the children sit in the winter and where the guest is made to sleep, for it is warmest place in the house. Lawrence, *Valley,* Op.Cit., p.249.
111. This song was sung for me by a group of village girls at Sheikhapora, Pulwama during my field trip in 1997 (unpublished).
112. It continues a cheap furnishing floor item and is made of *'Pyets'*, grassy product of lakes.
113. Shouq, *Europeans on Kashmir,* (ed) pp.228-229.
114. Few structures even stood today but in a renovated form.
115. This is just like building the castles in the sand. The big palace type houses of Kashmiri elite always worked as tools of attraction. That is why, commoners express intense desire to enjoy the comforts of such decorated houses. The expressions referred to above suggest the same feeling.
116. The delicate lattice-work has been the unique feature of Kashmiri wooden architecture. Owing to its delicacy and grandeour, it has served as a source of poetic inspiration for many poets. For details see *Koshur Encyclopedia*, Cultural Academy. Pp.163-170, Saqi, M.L. Op.Cit., 119.
117. Saqi, Op.Cit., p.64.

118. Ibid., p.75.
119. Ibid., also see Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade,* p.110.
120. Kashmiri *Wazwan* is said to be the Mughal addition to Kashmiri dietary calendar. Kashmiri marriage is considered incomplete without the multiple varieties of *wazwan*. It is served in a sequential way. Four people belonging to same sex share one big rice plate known as *Trami* (big nickled copper plate) See *Kashmir Today,* "Wazwan".
121. All these folk expressions show Kashmiris fondness for rice. See for details Knowles "*A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings*". Also see Nazir, *Keshery depety* (Kashmiri Folk Sayings).
122. Robbert thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment*, (Ed.) Fida Hussnain, pp.22-26.
123. Ibid., For details see Bazaz, P.N. *Struggle for Freedom in Kashmiris*, p.144.
124. Moorcraft, *Op.Cit.*, p.350. It constituted the major dietary item of Kashmiri particularly during the times of natural calamities like floods and famine.
125. This song I gathered from a fisher women "Rehti" from Hajin Sonawar, (unpublished).
126. Hugul, *Travels,* Op.Cit., p.163.
127. Victor Jacquemont, Op.Cit., p.76.
128. It is a distinctive style of sharing the *wazwan*. Four persons of same sex sit around the copper plate to share the sumptuous *wazwan*.
129. It is one of the famous forms of Kashmiri folk theatre. For details see M.S. Bhagat, *Koshur Luka theatre* (Folk Theatre of Kashmir). Kashmiri Department, Kashmir University.
130. M.L.Saqi, Vol. III, p.87.
131. Kashmiris have developed a unique mechanism of conserving vegetables for winter use. At the outset of the autumn season, when different vegetables are available in abundance at cheaper rates they dry up these vegetables in an open sunlight. The dried vegetables are then consumed during the chilly winter days.

132. Not only green and fresh vegetables are dried for winter use but different varieties of fish are also dried to use them in the winter. One type of such dried fish is known as *Howagard.*

133. It is another category of dried fish.

134. Lotus roots (*nadru*) is a favourite dish of Kashmiri people. It is mostly available during in winter months.

135. In order to add flavour to the winter dishes, people used to make the cakes of red chilly. Some spices and oil is added to the red chilies and is pounced with ginger in the *kanz* (mortar) then the mashed chilly is dried up in a circular shape. During winter days, women in order to add to the flavour of the dishes use this *vari.*

136. I have failed to find this folk expression in any of the folk saying collections but the same was told to me by one Syed Asgar Hussain of Hassanabad Rainawari.

137. People here in Kashmir generally take fish from September to April. Taking fish in the summer months would usually cause intestinal disorders. Hence people avoid taking fish in summer months.

138. Harisa is said to have been introduced here in Kashmir from Iran. It is a delicious winter dish and is being prepared by skilled person known a *herssegery.* It is also used as a gift item to please higher ups friends and relatives. Sensitive relations exchange herisa on some auspicious occasions during winter.

139. It was also a special dietary item that was cooked all through the night and it was prepared occasionally and was distributed among the friends and the neighbours and relatives.

140. These are all preparations and are used as the community meals in the hour of natural disaster to invoke the aid of the exalted souls for mitigating the distress.

141. The children to ridicule those who did not contribute for community meals sang this song.

142. This is a children's song that sing it in admiration of those who would contribute generously for community meals.

143. A dish prepared out of half grinded corn, boiled in winter. It served as a substitute for rice during the scarcity period caused either by famine or floods.

144. It is a rough and rustic kind of bread, which is very hard to chew. It is very oldest form of food item. There is a reference in Sheikh Nur-ud-dins poetry regarding this kind of bread and in a state of abject poverty people resorted to take this kind of rough bread.

145. Instead of break fast, Kashmiris are in the habit of taking salt tea with the wheat or maize flour bread. Kashmiris fondness for salt tea is unmatching. It was imported during our period of study from Sinkiang, China and other parts.

146. Kashmir had very close and rich trade links with different countries of the Central Asian region. It served as a halting spot for trading caravans coming from Central Asia to the South of India. See for details Central Asia and Kashmir Bamzai.

147. It is said to be a replica of Russian teapot: *Somavar*. It is made of a copper with a white nickel coat. Salt tea is prepared in a big samavar and the sweet tea kehwa is prepared in a small *samavar*. For details see *Kashmir media,* MERC-Kashmir University.

148. It is believed by the folk that few cups of salty tea reduces the fatigue and people enjoy this kind of tea particularly after hard labour. For details see Shah Abadi's *Chainama*. Reseach Library University of Kashmir.

149. This type of sweet tea known as *kehwa* is generally taken on festive days or other delightful occasions. People with rich taste add also Saffron to *kehwa* to make it more tasty and colourful.

150. Introduction, *Folk Tales*, Vol.7 M.Y.Teng. for details see *Hamara Adab* Folklore Number Kashmiri Department, Kashmiri University.

151. Introduction to Hatims Tales (Kash). M.Y. Teng.

152. During period under review, many Persian epics and romantic tales were either translated or adopted into Kashmiri by eminent Kashmiri poets like, Mehmood Gami, Wali-ullah Mattoo, Maqbool Kralwari, Wahab

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Parray Hajini and others. The entire period in the history of Kashmiri literature is termed as the period of *mathnavis* (see for details. Naji Munawar and Shouq, Shafi, *History of Kashmiri Literature* (Kash).

153. He was a professional story- teller who revealed Aurel Stein couple of Kashmiri folk tales. Stein's collection of Kashmiri folk tales is named after him.

154. An oldest extant Kashmiri folk tale. It has also been penned down by few Kashmiri poets during the period of our study.

155. It is one of the earlest oral pieces of histro-fictional literature. It brings into focus rivalry between the Nagas and the Pischasas, the two oldest Tribes, who inhabited in the Valley after the desiccation of water.

156. Bhands Folk Minstrels who amused people by their folk performances. See Lawrence, *Gazeteer of Kashmir*, *Valley*, and Bhagat, M.S. *Bhande jishan* and *Luke theatre*.

157. See my paper published in *Anhar* social protest as depicted in *Kashmiri Folk theatre*. Kashmiri Department, Kashmir University.

158. *Dambali* is one of the folk forms of Kashmiri dance. During the period of our study, it was a common agency of community recreation. The *dambaliys* of Khandru, Anantnag are famous for their skill, wit and proficiency. The *dambali faqirs* as they are known perform their art and skill on the *urs* days of different Sufi and Rishi saints particularly at the shrine of Baba Lal Din at Zakura and Baba Nasib at Bijbihara.

159. Lawrence, Op.Cit.p.257.

160. *Lari Shah* has already been discussed and these are some major topics about which we find references in our *Lari Shah*. These poems give us vivid picture of the people's sufferings amid natural calamities that Shocked people and the land repeatedly during the period under reference.

161. There are mainly two types of saints foreign and local. The local saints with distinct characteristics are known as Rishis. They have utter disregard for wordly pleasures and

prefer solitude to society. See for detail Ishaq Khan's *Kashmir's Transition to Islam,* the Role of Rishes.

162(a) Becha nagma is said to have gained momentum during the Afghan Rule in Kashmir. It was a popular recreational, means for commoners and the people interested in Sufi exercises. During the period under reference and most particularly during the lost phase of Dogra rule, these becha nagmas often resulted in group clashes. Sonnah-ullah Dar of Bagwanpora Sathu who had himself participated in such exercises revealed the details me.

162(b). It is a popular folk music form of Kashmir. For further details see Aima, M.L "Folk Music of Kashmir" Qaiser Kaslanders "Kashmiri Music". Some folk instruments used in chakri include, Tombak nari, Notu, Sarang, Sazi Kashmiri and few other folk apparatus. People amused themselves for nights together in the company of Chakri singers.

163. *Hafiza* denoted a charming woman who could remember songs ranging from Hafiz of Sheeraz to Rasul Mir of Shahabad by heart. Although the quarters of *Hafiza* were the abode of dance and song, she basically symbolized good manner and aristocratic etiquette. The institution seems to have reached to its zenith during Mughal times. It was one of the most important sources of recreation for landed elite and other categories of aristocracy. *Sheeraz* (English) pp.98-100. M.Y.Teng, See also Fida Hussanain, *Encyclopedia of Kashmir.*

164. Quoted by Shouq in *European on Kashmir.*

165. Tashvan and Maisuma are two localities in Srinagar city where *Hafiza* pavilions were situated, but during Dogras the institution degenerated and turned into brothel. In the light of fierce campaign launched by Subhan Naid of Misuma against the brothels Maharaja banned it in 1934. For details see, Khan, Ishaq. *History of Srinagar,* and *Sheeraza, Shaksiyat* Number.

166. Nazir, G.N.*Op.Cit.*,p.98.

167. It was one of the items of folk recreation , it has fallen in disuse now.

168. Though the song does not bear the name of its poet and was revealed to me by a lady "Khezer" of Sopore as a folk song. But its poetic treatment does not suggest it to be a piece of folk poetry. However, the song refers to an important recreational item, popular among children until, very recently.

169. These are all folk games.We don't find any reference of these games in historical narrative. The truth stands that these constituted an integral part of the Kashmiris folk sports calendar. Refer *Son Adab ,Kasheer number,* Cultural Academy. Also see *Keshur Nasri gwond*, Khyal and Rehbar. An article written by late Dina Nath Nadim entitled Kasmiri Folk games has been reproduced in the anthology of Kashmiri prose.

170. Saqi, M.L.*Op.Cit*.p.13 (children's song).

171. Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p.266.

172. It was a major recreational exercise for Sikh aristocracy. Generally these dancing girls would come from Wattal communities. According to Hugel these nautch girls were maintained at the state expenses and the Sikh governors were enslaved by these dancing girls. Maharaja Gulab Singh and Maharaja Ranbir Singh also maintained the *nautch* girls for themselves and for the European guests. Commenting on the sad plight of the *nautch* girls, Hugel further states a under.

"These poor creatures are doomed to a hard fate, they are not allowed either to sing or dance without permission, and if they get this, an officer of the government always accompanies them, who grasps, whatever they received. Hugel, Travels in Kashmir and Punjab, p.146. See also Hassan, Taarikh, Vol. II. P.673. Foster, Op.Cit, Vol. II, pp.24-25. Honigberger, Thirty Five Years in the East p.183. Wakefield,Kashmir and Kashmiris, p.170. Fedrick Drew. Jammu and Kashmir Territories, p.182.

173. Detailed as above.

174. Divan Kripa Ram was a Sikh Governor in Kashmir. He had an abundant taste for music and dance. He always managed to sit in the Shikara in the company of Kashmiri dancing girls wearing jingling feet ornaments. It was for his sensual attraction towards *Saaz and Awaz* that he was nicknamed as "Kripa Shroney".

175. These games were particularly popular among children especially in small girls.

176. Forester George, Op.Cit.,ii,p.26.

177. A temple dedicated to local dietary Ragniya Great jubilation is seen there at the time of annual fair. Kashmir Pandits do not take meat during the festive days. It is situated at Tulmul Ganderbal some twenty kilometers away from Srinagar.

178. J.S.Dev.*Natural Calamities of Jammu and Kashmir*,pp.50-55.

179. Lawrence, *Op.Cit.*,p.318.

180. I collected this *Rov* song from archives library Radio Kashmir Srinagar. This song is a part of the programme known as *'Nagma Wuzan Neeryn Te Nayan'*.

181. This *Rov* song was generally sung during the month of Ramzan.

182. M.L.Saqi, *keeshiry luki beeth* ,Vol.3p.180.

183. Ibid.

184. Ibid.

185. It is one of the celebrated sights in Srinagar. The Shrine houses the sacred relic of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). For details see G.R.Bhat,*MOI-MUQADAS-Tarikh Ke Aine Mein* (Urdu).

186. This song is often sung by young girls on the eve of Meraj-ul-Alam or Prophet Muhammads (P.B.U.H) birth anniversary.

187. This is a poem of elegiac nature and metre. The authorship is known. Hence I put it in the column of folk *marsiya*. I heard it from Mohammad Jawad of Bhagwan Pora Lal Bazar few years ago.

188. Sung by Nirmala Raina, Kashmiri Pundit lady married at Jammu Premnagar New plots.

189. Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment*, p.52. P.N.Bazaz, *Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*,p.
190. This song I collected from a shawl weaver Qadir Joo of Malarata Srinagar (unpublished).
191. Hindus hold Vitasta as a sacred river. The water of vitasta was used by Kashmiri Pandits for conducting various ceremonial exercises.
192. Ginsberg, *Sociology*, p.153.
193. Bogardus, E.S *Sociology*, p.475.
194. Anderson and Parker, *Society,* p.34.
195. M.L.Saqi, Op.Cit., p.44.
196. It is not published in any folk song collection.
197. Shad, *Anthology of Folk Songs* (*Wanvun* portion).
198. It is a kind of folk song related to the ceremony of death among Kashmiri Pandits. It is recited in a peculiar tune by a lady versed in the Technique. The category of folk songs has fallen in disuse. For details see Saqi,*Burze Metsi Hendy Beth.*
199. Saqi, Published in cradle-songs of Folk Song Collection Cultural Academy.
200. See for details *Customs and Rituals of Kashmiri Pandits*, S.N.Bhat, Kashmiri Department Publication. Also see Biscoe,*Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, Hindu Customs, pp.161-165.
201. Collected by M.L.Saqi.
202. Ibid.
203. Revealed to me by Dr.Satyabhama Razdan, of the Department of Linguistics, University of Kashmir.
204. After offering the Friday Prayers, special congregation was held at the graveyard, where under the leadership of Local Imam a collective *fateh* was conducted. After completing the *Fateh*, people gathered, were generally served with a cup of salt-tea at the house of the bereaved. The Friday occasion was perhaps initiated to provide an opportunity to the greater number of people to partcipate in the occasion because Friday was generally an off day for the skilled and the artisan class in urban Srinagar. In rural Kashmir, the ceremony was generally held on the 4th day of the deceased person.

205. *Kuliyati Maqbool Shah Kralwari,* verses quoted from famous poem *Grees Nama.*

206. This song was collected from an aged Kashmiri Pundit lady Shubavati of Sathu Bar Bar Sheh, who is presently living at Talab Tiloo, Jammu.

CHAPTER III

Reflection of Kashmiri Woman in Folk Verse

No study of a society is considered complete without a reference to the position of woman in it. The position of woman in a society reflects the cultural level, mental refinement and the standard of its civilization[1]. The ancient historical literature bears evidence to the fact that women in Kashmir enjoyed the maximum degree of freedom and liberty[2]. No socio-religious pursuit or exercise was deemed complete without the active participation of the women[3]. With the establishment of the Muslim Sultanate in the fourteenth century,women in Kashmir, received new incentives to continue their literary pursuits.[4] This is evidenced by a galaxy of celebrated ladies Kashmir produced during the period. But the dawn of Afghan rule in Kashmir signaled an unending period of gloom, aversion and degeneration[5]. In the wake of Afghan rule, not only the political fortunes of the state underwent a drastic change but the social institutions as well, did not remain unaffected. Kashmiri women, who once occupied a prominent position in the social milieu of Kashmir went into the deep oblivion of obscurity, ignorance, illetracy, disease and dependence.[6] Her responses, reactions and the protests against the system to which she was subject to, found expression in no other form as in the folk songs of Rov and wanvun[7]. Unlike historical literature, we do not find a stereotype picture of Kashmiri women in these rich folk melodies but we come across a Kashmiri woman who is full of

virtues and vices and with all beauty and ugliness. We find her in the form of a sincere wife, helping her husband by discharging multiple of domestic and commercial duties; and at the same time we find in her the feminine frailty that prompts her to satisfy the sensual lust of her paramour. In the same contrasting portrayal, we see her as a compassionate daughter, providing every sort of relief and consolation to her parents and at the same time, we find her engaged into number of anti familiar exercises as a daughter-in-law in her husband's house, causing rupture and disturbance in the otherwise peaceful and cordial atmosphere.[8] With all these contrasting colours, we find a true picture of Kashmiri women in different genres of Kashmiri folk literature and most particularly in Wanvun and Rov songs. These songs are said to be a running commentary of the sad plight of Kashmiri women, who in a particular period of our history were denied access even to the slightest degree of dignity and honour.

Birth of a Son was Regarded as Fortunate

There is an ample evidence available in the folk literature which show that the birth of a son was regarded as more fortunate than that of a daughter.[9] A quite good number of Rov and manzly beth (cradle songs) refer directly or indirectly to the disappointment of a women who had given birth to a female child. Take for example this cradle-song.

Deke prezlium nikeney zenai,
Vowani kenh nai gam mey chum.
Hash Miani khowash Cham Tanai,
Vowany kenh nai gam mey chum.[10]
(My fortune changed with the delivery of a male issue,
I am relieved of agony and pain.
My mother-in-law looks pleased with me now,
I am relieved of agony and pain).

In the following verse of a wanvun (marriage song) parents recall the painful moment when a daughter was born to them.

Zene chain dowakh tsav wanchan yaaryen,
daariyen peth chi hore wanvun.[11]
(Your birth caused bend
the towering trees of the jungle

now on your wedding, fairies are singing
melodies to depart you).

However, in absence of any female child in the family, parents and elders in the family usually expressed pleasure and delight on the birth of a daughter. This is depicted in this cradle- song,

Bakhte bed kur seny,
Dur deny dure deny.
Heri tape rude shreny,
Dure deny dura deny.[12]

(Our daughter has come with a good luck for the family,
She is the priceless diamond; she is the priceless diamond.
She is just like a fountain shower,
Amid scorching summer heat).

The enthusiasm created by the birth of a male child was equally contrasted by the down mood of the family members especially woman folk at the birth of the female child. But with the passage of time, it has been observed, that the daughter would receive extra love and care from the parents and family elders and there are innumerable child-songs (shury beeth) that deal with the extra-parental devotion towards their daughter. This is also substantiated by the prevalence of an institution of Dowakhtari-khana-Nashin during the period under reference. According to this scheme, the husband of the daughter is made to stay in wife's house, instead of taking wife to his home.

A portion of a marriage song concerning the delight of a father expressed on the occasion of bringing the husband of her daughter at his home is given as under.

Bebe seng kuri khaṇai moje,
Chon deka lon hai garai Av,
Maji ros kuri khanai moji,
Chon deka lon hai garai Av.[13]

(O my sole daughter's top shedding tears,
you will not have to part with me!
Your husband will settle with us permanently
in your parental home.
O, motherless daughter- don't sob and sigh-your
husband will stay with us permanently
in your parental home.

We have a very good number of folk expressions in the form of proverbs, riddles and sayings that furnish suitable information on the subject under discussion.

Early Marriage

Though the popular literature does not provide us any definite clue that might help us to ascertain the actual marriageable age of Kashmiri girl, but we can infer from innumerable folk expressions that girl were married at the very early age during the period under review[14]. As already stated in the foregoing pages that the first phase of the period under review (1819-1846) witnessed appalling heights of immoral activities; the parents thus were found always disturbed to get their daughters married as early as possible.[15] In addition to this the poverty factor could not also be altogether ignored which might have prompted the parents to get their daughters married at the early age. Our folk literature abounds in references that suggest that girls were married at the early age. In the following Rov song the pain experienced by such girls is epressed in a heart piercing tune.

Sane chum gomut vele vesy bavei,
Havei chowakh tai jigreky dag.
Tele tche pheri yeli bo ravei,
Havei chowakh tai jigreky dag.
Mely maji tchorum azlei lonei,
Bali hai osum vuni lowakchar.
Mur bo zejnes tez tule narei,
Havei chowakh tai jigreky dag.[16]

(O, my friend would you like to share my woes?
I am plunged into grief and gloom!
You will definitely have remorse!
But, when I will depart the world around!
My father managed my marriage, without
taking me into confidence,
I am reduced to ashes inwardly,
who is there to listen me?
Would you spare some time to share
my agony and pain?)

In yet another verse, we find the same protestive tune of a Kashmiri girl, who had been given in marriage without being asked for and how she spends her days in an environ of mistrust and suspicion, is depicted in this *Rov* song.

Shine mani hendy pethy endri gejsei,
Bali hai Rovum taza lowakachar.
Wavas athi soze tethis gravei,
Havei chowakh tei gigrety dag.[16]
(I have been allowed to melt like a frozen ice
in a mid sunshine,
Alas! I have been robbed of my beauty and youth!
I will convey my sad impressions
through a crow to my father,
Shall it listen the song of my sick soul!)

In addition to this,there are good number of folk expressions such as *bala paan*, *shury paan*, *leev mur, poshi ther*,[17] etc. etc, which stand as an evidence to the fact that girls in Kashmir were married at the very early stage of their life.

In one of the Kashmiri proverbs,a girl has been dubbed as the "pot of the fire in flames over the head of the father". If any leniency was displayed on the part of the father in discharging the marriage of his daughter, parents were made subject to severe criticism and ridicule.[18] But at the root of the seemingly social transaction, the youth, beauty and the glooming dreams of the delicate bride were left to destroy unsung and unheard.

As for the marriage negotiation, we can infer from popular literature that the bride and bridegroom in a Kshmiri social life, during the period under survey had no voice in the selection of a match.[20] The opinion of the girl or the boy relating to their marriage negotiation was regarded nothing less than indecency and opprobrious. No doubt, in Muslim families, the consent of the boy and girl was sought before penning down the marriage agreement (*Nikah*) but it was done more as an act of formality rather than enacting the conviction. The silence of a Muslim girl was generally taken for her approval to the marriage alliance. The Kashmiri proverb in circulation is an indicative to this set of situation. The proverb is as under:

Sherif kori henz tshopei go ankar.
(The very silence of a decent girl
symbolizes her approval for marriage contract).

Ignoring all together the opinion of a girl or boy, before being tied into the wedlock, often resulted into the post marriage conflicts, psychological tensions and the domestic feuds. There are a number of Kashmiri folk songs which contain ample information regarding the disastrous effects of the inconvenient and uncongenial marriages. Some times parents did not hesitate to marry their young daughters to the aged and ailing persons in exchange of petty benefits. See how an aged and handicapped bridegroom married to young and beautiful bride is made subject to abuse and ridicule in this Kashmiri satirical folk song.

Ade khor ade iyok gomut chotye,
Ami khote oswe motye jan.
Hendis tei hunis hankal kertav,
Goadeni sery tav khulhas vath.
Mehreny dedyye nabas kun vechtei,
Babas khowate bod meharaze hei ai.[21]

(How better it would have been to receive
an insane as a bridegroom!
See how ugly, handicapped ,aged he is!
It is just like tying together sheep and dog,
Poor alliance is destined to break
immediately!
Keep the option for divorce open.
O,bride, have a look ,
More elderly than your grandfather.

Not only among Kashmiri Muslims was the child-marriage in vogue, but the practice was in operation among the Kashmiri Pandits too.[22] Literary evidences suggest that many hindu girls would become widow even at a very tender age and spent the entire life in seclusion and servitude.[23] The grim picture of the enforced widowhood among the Kashmiri Pundits is stated by P.N.Bazaz in these words:

The savage practice of burning widows had been abolished but the custom of enforced widow-hood still persisted among the

Pandits. Its evil effects were worsened by the bad custom of early marriage. The status of a family was measured by age of a girl at the time of nuptials; the younger the girl the more respectable the family. Many of the girls lost their husbands in childhood. There were cases when girls of tender age, mere tiny toddlers, became widows. What mental agony and physical privations a maiden endured when, on reaching the age of puberty, she learned that she was married long ago and her husband was already dead! And the wretched widow could claim no friends to champion her cause.[24]

As revealed from Hindu folk religious song, Kashmiri Pundits considered it irreligious to marry their daughters even at the very tender age of eight. It was believed equal to sin[25] if a Hindu parent showed slightest delay in getting their daughter married. This is evidenced fom this *mekhi vatchun.*

telik bata kya darmi esi
Sata verish karan esy keniydan.
Timnei sowargeky bar vethy esi
Ram Lakhman vane vesiy gov.
OR
Azik bata kya pepi esi
Sata veryshan koriyen athadaran
Timnei nargeky bar vethy esi
Ram Lakhman Vanvesy gei.[26]

(Pundits in the past were highly religious minded,
They married their daughters
before they reached seven years age.
We presume a corner reserved for them in the heaven,
Abiding the dictation of Father,
Ram and Lakhman decided to leave for the jungle).

OR

(Pundits of today are sinner;
By allowing their daughters to stay at their fathers' house at the age of seven.
Hell! Awaits them!
Ram and Lakhman proceeded towards jungles).

But the trend underwent an abrupt change at the close of the period under review. This was largely because of the modern

education, initiated by European missionaries, that a roll of young Kashmiri Pundits began to crusade against the age old practice of early marriage, child widowhood and *sati*.

But so far Kashmiri Muslims were concerned, the trend continued even after the close of the period under survey. No attempt was made even by the religious elite among the Muslims like Mulhas and Pirzadas to liberate the Muslim community from the clutches of age-old traditions and practices.[27]

The unmatching conjugal relations sometimes led girls to resort to immoral exercises, which not only brought shame to the parents but all the relations had to cut a sorry figure.[28] How this ugliest reality of our social life has been metaphorically depicted in this folk verse.

Subihiki vaavo bar me elraavoo
Nikun mool raath gari tsiry ho aav[29]
(O, cool morning breeze, don't cause
the door of my house open,
father of my baby (my husband)
had reported back abruptly to his home).

An address to the morning breeze was particularly a hint to the paramour not to venture into her lover's house in presence of her husband. The above cited verse suggests that loyalty and trust was not the virtue that could always be attributed to Kashmiri women. Incidental exposure of such immoral exercise would often lead to divorces among Kashmiri Muslims. Even at times, it so happened that due to familial animosity, the conjugal partners were forced by their parents to break the emotional relations. Under such circumstances, the parted couple would never forget the delightful memories connected with their sweet conjugal life. The magnitude of the emotional crises caused by such forcoful separation is portrayed in this Kahmiri proverb.

khetli ditsayokh kath
temi dop myanian chi bhar vethy"
(A divorce though she is!
But she still feels emotionally concerned
with her ex-husbands house).

Knowing that she had been divorced long back; and had ceased to be the member of that family, she still feels worried to see her ex-husband's family members in trouble. The contrasting shades of Kashmiri women depicted in our folk literature is difficult to find in other literary sources.

Marriage of a boy and girl was almost settled in the family of like socio-economic level.[30] An indication to this social dimension can be discerned from below proverbs.

zechi zet te pechi pat ..

OR

hives hue go nabad tshioh.

The only qualification that was put to strict examination was to see whether a boy was in possession of a strong muscular strength or not. Any boy lacking such a basic qualification was generally dropped out. Folk sayings like *orzu te dor kot, hak bata khenewol* and *hivis hyuv*[31] refer to some of the fundamental qualifications, generally attached with the institution of marriage in Kashmir. Any compromise even of a slightest nature on above cited conditions and qualification was bound to lead towards negative results in the Muslim family life in Kashmir.

Polygamy

As regards polygamy, we find uncountable reference in the folk literature, but the content and the treatment of various Kashmiri folk tales lead us to suggest that Hindus as well as Muslims opted for second marriage only after the death of their previous wives.[32] No doubt, the institution might have been in operation in the families of the upper strata of Kashmiri society; but its presence among the commoners particularly during the period of utter economic crises could hardly be attested by qualification and merit. However, the frequent use of folk expression like swan[33] in the vernacular, which stands for evil machinations of the co-wife could not be also ignored altogether. It symbolized a constant terror in the other wise calm and cordial family life of Kashmir. Judging against this background, the presence of the institution like polygamy could not be disputed altogether. In context of Kashmir society during the period under review, there could have been little for

commoners to follow the feudal or elite tastes except during the periods of unavoidable urgency and need.

Purdah

In spite of being in majority, only the women of few privileged and orthodox Muslim families observed Purdah in the strict sense of the term.[34] Not to talk in public, even within the four walls of their houses, these families, maintained separate chambers for their ladu folk. In tune with the aristocratic and feudal temperament, women of the privileged Kashmiri Pundit families also adhered to a kind of veil that marked their special status and position.[45] Barring these privileged Muslim religious families, there was no strict purdah system in operation in Kashmir during the period under survey.[36] No doubt, Muslim women in Srinagar city belonging to the artisan families were in the habit of using a kind of Purdah known as Burqa when they usually came out of their dwellings for discharging any social assignment. As per the literary evidence, Kashmiri Pundit women belonging to common Hindu families did not use any kind of veil to conceal their charms.[37] G.T.Vigne wrote, "There is no purdah or concealment of the features of women excepting among the higher classes". The habit of maintaining privacy and confinement by the privileged Kashmiri Pundit families seems to be guided more by aristocratic fashion than any religious dictation. A careful study of Kashmiri Rov songs reveal that it had always been the ardent desire of women belonging to common folk to have a glimpse of the ladies of the privileged and the economically well off families. With all probability, it might have been thought incident and undignified by the upper class familes of Kashmiri society to allow their lady folk to mix with the ladies of the common origin.

The inborn tendency of a fair sex to share every recreational occasion collectively of course, prompted the women of unprivileged classes to invite the ladies of the privileged one to take part in the group recreational exercises like Rov especially on festive days of Idd and other occasions. The intense desire of women of common origin to enjoy the idd jubilation

together with the ladies of privileged classes is expressed in a very touching style in this Kashmir Rov song.

Piri koryanqoraabi naryan, kati neran nebar lo
Sheikhi koren qoraabi naryan, kati neran nyabar lo
Idd aayam rov hay karav dery gandav vyasav lo
Miri koryan qoraabi naryan, katy neran nyabar lo
Aav ramzaan Quran parav, volay sarav janat lo[38]
Miri koren qoraabi naryan , kati neran nyabar lo

(Girls of Muslim Pir families can't move out of their dwellings.They maintain strict veil, Idd has come, let us sing idd choruses-It is futile to call the girls of 'Mir' family to share 'Rov' songs with us.
Ramzan has come-let us recite Quran in melodious tune,Girls of Mirza family wore pherans with 'qowaraba' type sleeves-How is it possible for them to come out and take part in the 'Rov' songs).

Even for common Hindu women, it was a dream desire to share any occasion of jubilation with the ladies of the aristocratic-Dhar family of Kashmiri Pundits. See how this intense desire is expressed in this festive song of Kashmiri language.

Dhare bhayi vese cham mandachan ches tai
Vesi hund getche ha manze cham dowes tai.[39]

(I crave to have a company of the daughters of Dhar family, Inspite of my strong urge, I could not see them why?-there is big high wall separating the two).

In Srinagar as well as in rural areas, the majority of the Muslim women had to work side by side with men either in the Karkhana or in the field. In these circumstances purdah was an object, which was hardly taken care of. Women folk in villages moved freely without any purdah and in the urban areas too the women belonging to *haanz* (boatmen) *kander* (bakers) *dander* (vegetable growers) moved and exhibited their charms publicly. For this public orientation and the sense of superiority rooted in the perception of rich pedigree, Muslim religious families often treated these Muslim sections with disdain and contempt.

Working Women

An attentive study of Kashmiri folktales lend us to hold that common folk believed less in gender discrimination particularly in context of work culture. We find abundance of information regarding Kashmiri women working side by side with their male partners in different disciplines of life.[40] This is also substantiated by the information contained in the literary texts of the period. The folk poems like *'Kral Koer', 'Pehli Koer', Dhobi Bhayi', 'Kander koer'* and *'Grees Korey'* bear ample evidence to the fact that Kashmiri woman discharged its professional talent very skillfully and thereby she would contribute in the over all welfare and the happiness of the family life. Not to talk of discharging domestic assignment or field works, Kashmiri women discharged the function of a shepherd lending sheep and cattle both in the plains and on the mountain summits of the beautiful valley. In the *'Pehly Koer'* (shepherd girl) folk balled, Kashmiri girl has been shown in full possession of professional wit and the wisdom which she discharges while regulating the large flock of sheep. In 'Kral Koer'[41] (potter woman) folk balled also, she is appreciated for her unmatching patience and personal qualities. The folk poem Grees Koer not only unveils the beauty gifts of her bewitching youth but it also uncovers her resourcefulness to enact any kind of work assigned to her by her family members. From the content of above referred to poems, we can hold with less doubt that except the women of privileged classes, the ladies of common nature helped their families in multiple of ways and thus it carries enough to erode the myth that Kashmiri women were devoid of physical charms and professional gift.

The Widow

Reflections regarding widow in Kashmiri folk tales and proverbs draw us to believe that widowhood especially at a young age was considered to be the worst possible misfortune.[42] Although, Islam does not put any restriction on the widow remarriage, but still the death of a husband would divorce a Muslim women from all the wordly gifts. She was looked down upon and on times was badly treated by her family members.[43]Different folk-expressions prevalent even

today in Kashmiri language guide us to great extent in understanding the collective attitude and behaviour of the individuals towards the widows in the society. See the following folk sayings:

Mowand kiya diyi mowandi pam.
Mowandi Nei qesmet asiha bad runei kyaze merihas.
Mowandi nish cha reny mangeyi gatchen.
Moond kya di kowali bund.[44]

It does not behave proper for a widow to pass bad remarks against another widow.
Had widow not been herself unfortunate, her husband would not have died so untimely.
You can not place a petition for husband before the widow.
How widow could be expected to repair the cracks in a flooded river bank?

In sharp contrast to the description of a widow in the proverbs, we find revealing details about widow in number of Kashmiri folk tales. In folk tales a widow is often dubbed as the embodiment of human virtues like patience, tolerance, sacrifice and her commitment to the deceased husband is appreciated when she is being projected as taking every care to look after the relics of her dead husband.[45] There are quite a good number of references in our folk tales wherein a Muslim widow is shown to as taking a job of maidservant in the rich Kashmiri Pundit family to earn the livelihood for herself and for her children. She also acted as a go-between (manzimyor) arranging the marriage for Muslim couples.

But the most reliable companion, Kashmiri widow generally found in her isolation was the Yender,[47] the spinning wheel. We have a good number of wheel songs (Yendre beth) which contain pathetic account of painful life of a Kashmiri widow. An attentive examination of these wheel songs unlock the deep pain and the pangs of Kashmiri widow, caused by her family members in permanent absence of her life partner.

From the above account, it looks less imaginary to hold that *Yender* (wheel) was not only a major source of widows sustenance but it was a friend in solitude, a solace amid exhaustion and a hope in misery.

Barrenness: Woman's Greatest Misfortune

Along with widowhood, barrenness[48] was also recognized as the gravest flaw of a woman. A barren woman was often compared to an eagle. She was given no respect and her voice in the household carried little weight and value. This is understandable, as motherhood is regarded to be the supreme function of women. Here are few folk sayings that may help us in understanding the general mood of the society regarding the barrenness of a woman.

"Veentis hei keryze
te heentis kya karakh"
"Hant kya zani shury sund dod
Ganth kya zani puty sund dod"
"Pwatre bwachi hun kwachi"
(Hard nut is fruitful enough than a barren lady)
(It is impossible for a barren lady to have a slightest idea of labour pain)
A widow resembles an eagle which is devoid of any love to chick.
(A barren lady likes to have a puppy in her lap than to remain childless).

In joint family structure which was prevalent in Kashmiri during the period under reference, a barren lady was often made subject to taunts and teases especially from her mother-in-law and sister-in-law (Hàsh te Zam).[49] She was put to live under constant psychological strain and if she failed to ward off barrenness, she was forced to leave the house under the dictations of Hash and Zam. Sometimes she was not even divorced for years together and was left unattended in her parental house. The sad plight of such ladies is depicted in this folk saying.

Setath verish beni che amets sethe vehris beeyis vapas
(A seventy year old divorced sister had come back to her seven year old brother).

Under such strained situation, the only spot of solace for maltreated ladies seemed to be the shrine of any saintly soul. We have plenty of references available in different genres of Kashmiri folk literature that may be advanced to attest our

argument. Here we quote a verse of a folk song in which a barren lady is advised by her friends to visit the shrine of Sheikh Noor-ud-din to ward off her barrenness.

Alamdar sund patchi san khasevei
tali neran khaban tar
Sath chem mei tati kowatch bervey
tali neran khaban tar

(O, lonesome and broken! You rush to the shrine of Sheikh Nur-ud-din at tsaar,
Your dream and yearning will bear the fruit there!
You reveal all your deepest pangs there,
I am sure you will be blessed there
with a smiling hope)!

The same kind of feeling is depicted in this Kashmiri proverbs also.

Demby dadi chi larun pewan astanan"

(Barrenness prompts a lady to rush madly towards the tombs of the saints).

Though there was no restriction on the widow's remarriage among the Muslims, it was found that the ladies whose husbands died even during their youth preferred to live lonely for their children than to go for second marriage. In case of Kashmiri Pundit family, widow remarriage was discouraged more by Brahminical conservatism rather than the personal wish or intention of the widow. To quote Bazaz:

> Divorce and remarriage of widows were detested by selfish Hindus who attached moral and religious stigma to these essential liberties and thus the unfortunate women remained subservient to the male authority for the whole of their lives. The magnitude of of cruelty in enforced widowhood can be estimated by the fact that, in 1920 A.D, during Pratab Singhs days, there were thirteen percent of Hindu girls who had lost husbands in early childhood when they were totally ignorant of the significance of the marriage ceremony, or consequences of wodowhood. Equally distressing was the case of hundreds of deserted young Hindu wives whom society refused the elementary human rights of divorce and remarriage despite the

fact that they were known to be innocent and had been caste aside by the caprice of heartless husbands.[52]

The estimation of A.L.Altekar regarding the position of widow in a Hindu civilization applies with equal justification to Kashmiri Pundit community. To quote him:

Generally a widow, economically dependent on members of her husbands family, could be ill treated and abused, sometimes blamed for an unhappy occurrence in the family... She had to work hard and put up with all kinds of indignities and humiliation from seniors, sometimes, junior house hold members. And if this were not sufficiently disregarding, she was considered inauspicious.[53]

Not to talk in terms of degree or magnitude widowhood both among the Muslims and the Hindus was treated as a big family disaster and misfortunate. This is also evidenced from the folk expressions where in, it is wished and prayed that the husband of a lady should remain alive with a smile on his face.

The commonest and the best way of blessing a married women in Kashmiri folk expression is

Deke ruzy nei vara
Deke pushy nei vensi
Deke prezelinei vensi"

Let your forcehead (symbolizing husband) remain safe and secure for all the times.
Let your life partner remain by your side in all thin and thick
Let the shine of your forehead remain bright for all the times].

The worst possible curse which a Kashmiri women would give out of intense animosity and hatred to her enemy is that "let she become widow". In vernacular it is expressed as

Mowande vedal getchynei
Peyi nei mondetion karun
(You be destroyed like a widow
Let you live life of a widow)

Adoption

In order to manage an alternative for the natural heir, Kashmiri Muslims resorted to somewhat secular arrangement

known as *pisri parwardahi*. According to this system a male kinsman or tribesman was appointed as an heir by a sonless proprietor to inherit his property. But the institution received little appreciation of the society as is evident from this proverb;

yi watchi taluk kari
ti kati kri batchi taluk[55]
(What a person can expect from his natural heir,
cannot expect from adopted one.)

In a published doctoral thesis Altaf Ahmad Ahngar gives his impression of the institution in the following words:

> Among Muslim agricultural tribes of Kashmir, customary appointment of a heir is in no sense connected with religion and is purely a secular arrangement resorted to by a sonless owner of land in order to nominate a person to succeed him as his heir. The object is not to secure any religious benefit for the soul of the appointer but to obtain a practical and temporal benefit.[56]

Relations between Various Family Members

From an attentive analysis of different categories of Kashmiri folk literature we find that there emerge certain stereotyped pictures of each relationship over and time again. For instance the '*Hash*' and '*Zam*' and '*Bei kakeny*' will be found behaving with each other in the same way in innumerable songs. Though the folk literature provides several pictures of relationship, each of these has certain specific features that are repeated in more or less the same combinations. To go back to our example, the relations between the '*Hash*' and '*Nosh*' are portrayed as discordant in majority of the songs while in few songs the relations between the two are shown as cordial. A study of these variations adds to the understanding about a relationship derived from the study of its typical depictions. Let us now consider the relationship one by one.

Mother and Daughter

In Kashmiri oral literature, we seldom find a woman wishing to be a mother of a girl but the moment she is born, it captivates the heart of a mother. A Kashmiri mother is seen

more inclined towards daughter than the son particularly at the marriageable stage. The *wanvun* songs sung at the time of departure describe in a very touching way the separation between the mother and the daughter. The following verses from a departure song show mother's concern for her daughter well being in her husband's house.

az tam rechmekh dowad tei dane
khanei meji ghar getshe khei
kihey chak dilas tei konei chak bavan.
kyazi chak tchali osh travan, Aadench kurei
khasi soane takhtasBakhts geye bederiye.[57]

(Until now I have brought you up with milk and butter,
Now the time has come for you to depart your parental home.
Why don't you express freely to your mother?
What grieves you inwardly my daughter?
You are destined to live a happy married life; this is indicated by the golden decorated *doli* awaiting you in the courtyard).

The daughter also seems aware of the magnitude of her mother's love towards her. This can be culled from the songs in which a girl, in her husbands place, tells about her miserable life in the *veeriv* (*susral*) to her brother who had gone there. In nearly all such songs the girl asks her brother not to tell about it to her mother, for it would be unbearable for her. The following lines occur in several *Rov* and *Vanvun* songs.

Bhayi esem cheni sath tei,
Me che gemetch watches dettei.
Maji yuth no wanakh kenh tei,
Be ha vendei hetik rath tei.[58]

(O, my brother, you are the soul source of my consolation,
I am betrayed and broken in my husband's house!
But don't reveal my sad plight to my mother,
I will die if you reveal my condition to my mother).

A motherless daughter is always seen broken in tears particularly in her *Veeriv(in-law's house)*. If her brother fails to visit her *veeriv* for long, she is shown in the songs as addressing to the wind around to convey her impressions of sadness and loneliness to her father and brother. If incidentally

she meets any close or distant acquaintance, she does not miss the opportunity to reveal him or her miseries and woes.

Zery gowagleo maliyun ketey,
Maliyun myon tule mului vetey
Shetch hai sosaz kavas athey
Kiho kavo oy no ethey.[59]
(Does any one know where my parental home is?
Let me tell, it is on the way to tullamulla.
If I see none whom I know! I will send the message through crow,
Oh, crow, you will hardly be misled to reach the destiny my parental home)

In yet another *chakri beeth* (Folk choral song) how a motherless daughter consoles herself is expressed in a very touching manner:

Bebe myane zinde roz panei,
Jan vendeyo yari jananei.
Maji malyon yelichu asanei,
Raja malyon teli chu basanei,
Meej panei chi taslah diwanei[60].
(O, my father, I prey for your long life,
In case mother is alive,
Parental home looks nothing less than a royal abode,
Mother is a great source of love and compassion).

Contrary to this cordial relationship that exists between the mother and the daughter, we find constant protests of daughters in our folk tales against the step-mothers' harsh treatment. There is a famous Kashmiri proverb wherein a step mother is equated with wild a wolf or a jackal. *Voawre mej gei ven shej*[61]. In almost all folk tales which feature the antagonized relationship between the children and the step mother, children, particularly female children, are often shown grudging against the inhuman approach and the maltreatment of the stepmothers. In some of such tales, a step mother does not even hesitate to poison[62] the step-children out of unimaginable grudge and hatred. However, it is this variation and contrast that provides real touch to otherwise ornamental literary creations. These literary expressions not only depict

the over all mood of the society but these creations help in understanding the social pulse of the concerned society.

Besides being projected as an embodiment of noble human virtues, mother, in Kashmiri folk literature is presented as an effective tool of character formation. In one of the Kashmiri proverbs, she is compared with a potter. (*moj geyi krej/* Mother is just like a potteress.) The way a potteress makes and moulds the raw mud to give new shapes and styles of his pots, in the same way mother displays her responsibilities in fashioning the character of her children. For her utmost love, compassion and selflessness, children in Kashmiri society are more inclined to their mothers than to their father. This is also endorsed by different folk expressions used as pledges and vows to attach more reliability and weightage to ones commitments. She is always seen painfully conserved for the general welfare and the happiness of her children.[63] In different folk forms mother is always pictured as an unmatching symbol of sacrifice and servitude.A mother's concern for her children is also depicted delicately in these folk verses.

Tchope kero, Tchope karo
Rowani neri garyo,
Karo mej lejyo, ho nete ho.
Astanan zalei tile pej, ..
Mastana mej lej yo.
Chain bapth ves me gej[64]
(Stop crying! Stop crying!,
I will adore your arms with variety of silver ornaments.
O, my hope, I am ready to sacrifice my life for you).
(I will offer heavy quantity of oil for the illumination of the shrine,
What then if I have to undergo torture and trouble to reach to a distant shrine!
You know that I have been robbed off all my valuable possessions for you).

Hash and Nosh Relations (Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relations).

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You know that I have been robbed off all my valuable possessions for you).

Hash and Nosh Relations (Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relations).

One of the most intriguing relationships we find in Kashmiri folk literature is that of *Hash and Nosh* (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law). It is a relatioship portrayed as one of the mistrust, doubt, animosity and disintegrity. Kashmiri folk literature both in prose and poetry abound in references to the oppressive behavioural style of *Hash* and how it affects the entire gamut of emotional scheme of family-life has been the subject of major chunk of Kashmiri folk songs.[65] In addition to this there is a sizeable number of folk sayings and proverbs in use even today which tell us about the unpleasant relationship between the *Hash* and the *Nosh*. See for example these proverbs:

i)"Hash to thez Nosh ti thez
Deg dez te vale kus"
ii) "Heshi hendy ti doh tchor
Te noshi hendy to doh tchor"
iii)"Nosh beni ne kur
Hash beni ne moj"
iv)"Nosh demie phoher
Hashi demie budith"

i.(Since both mother-in-law and daughter-in-law equally claim high pedigree, none is ready to remove a boiling pot from the burning stove which is ready to be spoilt).

ii.(In their own turn, both mother-in-law and daughter-in-law enjoy dictatorial positions in the family)

iii.(Neither daughter-in-law is any substitute for daughter nor mother-in-law can replace mother in love and devotion).

iv.(Remember, daughter-in-law I have given you a spoilt food I know, O my mother-in-law, I will pay you in the same coin when you grew old and grey).

It appears from the study of folk songs that the *hash* considers it to be her right to order about and scold the *nosh*. Examples from folk songs of such assertions by the *Hash* are innumerable. The *Hash* may not say such things in real life but her desire to rule over the *Nosh* is well known.

References regarding conflict between *Hash* and *Nosh* abound in Kashmiri folk literature. There are number of tales also that describe the cruelties of the *hash.* In some of the tales, *Nosh* is shown as taking her revenge when she is in a position to do so or when she feels sure of her husbands support and patronage. In the following folk song *Hash* is shown as poisoning the ears of her husband's daughter against the newly married daughter-in-law.

Hange mange bednam nosh bichari
Hashi hendy kharei kya wanei
Ore yiwani wonenam heras
Nosh chei seras bhatę khewan
Ore yiwani wonenam zemei
Dowahas nei meny nam kemimanh.
(My mother-in-law leveled baseless allegations against me,
how could I recall the countless ill machinations of my mother-in-law?
Without losing a minute, she complained about my over eating to my father-in-law,
She even told my husband's sister about my unfounded noncompliance of her dictates).

Not in tune with the established notion the content of some other proverbs and sayings suggest that the presence of the *Hash* in a family and her taunting tune worked as a corrective against manifold family evils. Her presence in the family marked the discipline and order in the family life of Kashmir. By not allowing her daughter-in-law to indulge in nonserious and meaningless pursuits, she played a positive role in bringing domestic peace and the prosperity of the family. It is perhaps of this creative function that the presence of a *Hash* in the family has been appreciated by the society. This is evidenced by the following folk sayings and the proverbs:

Hash ros ghara go peshe ros ler
Hash ne zam wajare gam
Verheji maktche per nei asi noshi
nei asi hash tei zam
(A family without mother-in-law is
just like a house without roof).

In absence of mother-in-law and sister-in-law
family presents a deserted look)..
(Mother-in-law and sister-in-law is
to daughter-in-law what an axe is to hard log of wood).

From the indepth study of Kashmiri marriage songs *Wanvun*, we are guided to observe that at the time of daughter's departure for her husband's house along with the *baraat* party, she is repeatedly advised by her mother to serve her mother-in-law in the same way as she treated her own mother. The same feeling is expressed in these lines of Kashmiri *Wanvun* song

Hash cheny ametch halam dery deri,
Kery zes piyale berdery ye,
(O my daughter, your mother-in-law had come here with high hopes,
You are advised to show complete submission, obedience and respect to her).

One of the most striking reasons for this kind of unpleasant relations between *Hash* and *Nosh,* as I perceived, after examining some marriage songs, seems to be rested more on the material reasoning than on the traditional stereotyped relation between the *saas* and the *bahu*. In Kashmir during the period under reference, all marriage expenses were exclusively born by the parents of the bridegroom, therefore, the mother and the sister of the husband took it as a matter of right to dictate terms and conditions to their newly married bride. They treated her not as a respectable member of the family but as an ordinary market commodity that was purchased against the cash payment. It is why she was to act as a drudge from dawn to dusk, going to distant jungles to bring firewood on her hand and on her return from the distant woods, she was often asked to pound shali in a stone mortar with wooden pestles. The pain she would experience from dawn to dusk domestic pursuits is depicted in a very touching style in this 'mortar-song' (*kanze beeth*).

yete legim,
hete khetsem,
bhangi vetches,
tchangi khethes,
dur lejis, Hur gejis,

tapi dezis, chite chi.[67]

(Continuous pounding the rice from dawn to dusk
with redoubled body movements caused
skin-cracks inmy hands,
I have been married distant away,
My youth and beauty faded out abruptly!
I feel exhausted in the mid day scorching heat).

In some of the '*Rov*' songs we find a deviation and a contrast to traditional unpleasant relationship between the '*Hash*' and the '*Nosh*'. There are number of folk songs where a '*Nosh*' has been shown praising her '*Hash*' for her civility and gentleness. Few lines of one such song I record here for reference.

Khir dowad tei shaybat chavanavan
Moj hash cham rangi rangi razvaan
Ayi Quran Sehras Perenavan,
Maji melis aye cham manganavan[68].

(My mother-in-law frequently offers me different kinds of sweet dishes,
She entertains me in a variety of ways.
She convincingly induces me to recite the Quran everyday early in the morning,
She asks me to offer special prayers for the well being of my parents).

This contrasting explanation of the '*Hash*' and '*Nosh*' relations led us to maintain that the reason behind the repeated protest of the '*Nosh*' against the teasing attitude of the '*Hash*' was perhaps due to the fact that usually an unmarried daughter in her parental home was treated with exemplary love and affection. Her petty liking and interests were taken care of. She would feel disturbed in her husband's home at the notice of even a slightest deviation to the treatment she was used to at the hands of her parents. In such a seemingly unbalanced situation a newly married bride could not help but to protest in an exaggerated way even at the slightest stingy remarks of her husbands parents.[69]

Zaam-Kaakeny (Relations between bride and her husband's sister)

A relationship between *Zaam* and *Beikakeny* (bride and sister-in-law) as depicted in Kashmiri folk literature is no less a strained and quarrelsome relation than that of '*Hash'* and '*Zaam*'. At times the relation between the two assumes such an alarming position as would result in the total disintegration of the Kashmiri family life. The sister of the husband who used to enjoy a privileged status before her brother was married finds herself in somewhat changed situation and she holds her sister-in-law responsible for her brother's alienation. She poisons the ears of her father and mother against the wife of her brother and in turn they start teasing their daughter-in-law. Immediately after the marriage of a son, in almost majority of the Kashmiri families particularly in lower middle classes, the process of disintegration starts in the family. The *zaam* ,as shown in the literature does not leave any stone unturned to tease and taunt her '*Beikakeny*'.[70] There is a Kashmiri proverb that indicates to this state of social affairs.

"Zam hei asi gam tati peth sozes pam"

(How does it matter, if zam is married distant away,
She will seldom miss an opportunity to tease her sister-in-law).

Under such disturbing conditions the only way left for a *"Beikakeny"* was to leave for '*maalyun* (parental home). The pain caused by the long enforced separation is expressed in number of Kashmiri '*Rov* songs'.

Lolan temy sendy dath cham kermetch
Deth cham kermetch.
Tas kemy bery nam kan tei lo lo
Hai beli yaras vente lo lo.
Keli gethi yawun zaye tei lo lo
Doh go balas tchaye lo lo.[71]

[His (husband's) separations had plunged me into deep grief,
Who had poisoned his ears?__ I know it is his sister.
O, my bosom friend, please convey my heartfelt impressions to my life partner,

The bloom of my youth will go waste-How painful it
is to live separately!
The sun of my youth is about to set in).

In number of Kashmiri folk tales, zam is frequently shown leveling false charges against her brother's wife. She often makes her brother suspicious about the chastity of his wife. Perhaps its most striking example is furnished in this Kashmiri folk balled "*Zami Hendy Zulum*". Some of the lines of this long poem are given here for reference.

Maji henz eses khanei moji,
Veriv gari kiya gudrun piyom.
Shine meny tapan heni heni geyis,
Maji henz eses khanei moj.
Dur shaharas legnes dekenei,
Kotah kruth pyom azleilon.
Zem bo nehkei hantchan legis,
Maji henz eses khanei moj.[72]

(I was the sole object of love in my parental home,
How can I reveal the magnitude of pain,
experienced in my husband's house?
I was allowed to melt down like a slate of frozen
ice in a scorching sun heat.
It was destined that I was married distant away,
How painful my fortune proved!
My 'Zam' leveled unfounded allegations of
immorality against me).

In multiple of Kashmiri folk tales the role of "*Bei kakeny*" has also been painted in black colour. She is shown taking her revenge against the *zaam* immediately after the death of her father-in-law or mother-in-law. The death of a father or mother is no less a death for the unmarried daughter. Now it is the turn of '*Bei kakeny*' to poison her husband against his sister. The indifferent altitude of the "*bhabi*' towards her *zaam* on the occasion of latter's marriage is depicted in the following lines of a Kashmiri marriage song.

Huri cha nerun veriv kuneye,
Bheyis veny tos pate neres.
Bhabi keti ches bihit kuny zenyye,
Bheyis veny tos pate neres.[73]

OR

Moji ros korey menz cha attenei,
Kona chive wataney zul kerith.[74]

(A beauteous bride like fairy is about to leave for her husbands house,
Tell her brother to see her off!
Does any one know where her bhabi has confined herself on this auspicious event?
Tell her brother to see her off,
OR
O motherless bride, mehendi on your hands is still fluidy,
It is sad not to have streets illuminated on the auspicious day like marriage).

In Kashmiri folk tales and in some of the songs, we often find that a motherless bride prefers to live in her husband's house to avoid her jealous and arrogant '*Bei kakeny*'.

But the refernces are not waiting too about the exemplary love and devotion of a *bhabi* towards her orphan *zam*. In a folk story "*Damane Tsroth Asun*" we find that a *Bheikakeny* discharges the role of a real mother in arranging the marriage of a *zam* and in order to console her *zaam* she even offers her jewellery to her.

Brother and Sister

The relation between brother and sister is portrayed as extremely affectionate in the various forms of Kashmiri folk literature. But there is a proverb in Kashmiri language *"Beni geyi theny to Boyi go keny*" which means sister is as sober and mild as butter , and brother is as hard as stone. This similarity though predominantly find expression in the day to day behavioural pattern of the brother and sister relations, one can not ignore the indepth love an average Kashmiri brother possess for her sister. In different Kashmiri marriage songs the sister express the wish that her brother should accompany her to husbands house at the time of her marriage. If a brother fails to visit her married sister, she gets restless and frustrated as is revealed in different Kashmiri '*Rov*' songs. The visit of a brother to her married sisters house brings her new home and

pleasure. In a folk story '*Lole Mets*'[75] a sister is shown feeling afresh and relieved to see her brother in the courtyard of her husbands house. In yet another Kashmiri folk tale *Beni te boy*[76] leaves her husband's house madly without seeking the permission of family elders, when she comes to know that her brother has been caught in a trouble. On seeing his wife so concerned towards her brother, her husband also cultivates an indepth love towards the brother of his wife is well depicted in this Kashmiri folk saying.

Beetsen manzekusu chi toth heher
Bata manza kheh chuy tath tehar.
(In family relations none excels brother-in-law
in love and affection).
(Among rice dishes, *Tehr* is unmatching).

Husband wife Relation

The indepth study of different forms of Kashmiri folk literature tend us to maintain that women as a wife in Kashmiri peasant set society was not given her due respect.[77] This is also depicted by a famous Kashmiri proverb.

Zanane geyi brande keny
(The status of a wife is nothing more than a stone of an outer entrance of a house).

In context of Kashmiri social life as was stated earlier, she was treated nothing more than a drudge or the hired domestic servant. In rural Kashmir her position as a wife was more pitiable. She was assigned every kind of rough and rustic job. In some well off families both among the Muslims and the Hindus, she was not allowed to enter into a dialogue with her husband in presence of the family elders.[78] She was to seek prior permission of the family elders before she could meet any member of her parental side on his visit to her home. She was often made subject to severe humiliation even for petty lapses by every member of the husband's family. If any unpleasant occurrence happened there in the family, she was usually held responsible for that. She was supposed to get up early in the morning and was not allowed to go to her bedchamber before the completion of the day's home task.[79] Her domestic engagements include among other things, husking of Shali in a

stone mortar, (*Kanz)* cooking every item of the Kashmiri's dietary day calendar, sweeping the entire house and the adjacent courtyards and the lawns; cleansing the utensils; washing clothes of all the family members; bringing water in earthen pitchers from distant or nearby river *ghats*, making beddings for all the family members etc. etc. in addition to this, she was also desired to bring firewood from the distant jungles for daily use and the storing for winter days. This dawn to dusk busy schedule of domestic engagements would often tell upon her health and this is substantiated by the horrible accounts of European medical missionaries who visited the valley time and again during the period under reference. According to the Kashmiri Medical Missionary society report within twelve months of woman doctor Fanny Bulter's stay in Srinagar she treatedfive thousand women patients. Paying rich tributes to Fanny Bulter for her noble task of treating ailing Kashmiri women, Mark L.G. Wilson writes:

For ten long years, the Kashmiri women, who wept bitterly for their doctor 'Miss Sahib', waited for such another to minister to their sufferings.[80]

Not only under feeding, over work and the ill treatment of the elders towards them constituted some of the major causes for the worsening of the physical charms of Kashmiri women, but equally torturing was the pain caused by the long absence of their husbands who had either been sent forcibly to under take the inhuman task of '*Begar*' or had voluntarily migrated to Punjab at the outset of winter to earn the necessary livelihood for their dependents. The pain and pang of this category of forlorn women of Kashmir find pathetic expression in different Kashmiri folk songs. In the following folk song, Kashmiri women express intense desire for the early return of their male members from Punjab.

Kam gander Punjab ander keshiri taran na,
Kam gander sowander sowander keshiri taran na,
Bare gemety peymety pather keshiri taran na,
Harde wavey phoruk kajer keshiri taran na.[81]

(A sizeable number of Kashmiri youth had gone to the plains of Punjab, we prey for their safe and early return,

They were the beautiful lot among the Kashmiri youth.
They might be feeling homesick now,
Before the winter set in, they had migrated to Punjab, we pray for their safe and early return).

In yet another '*Rov*' song, women lament deeply for the long absence of their male partners who had been sent for beggar and nothing was known of their where- abouts:-

Mot hei poshan geyom yor konei av,
Rozi roshan geyom yor konei av.
Nejde balan ketchom yor konei av,
Shere legith geyom yor konei av.[82]
(My life partner had been taken away forcibly to go across the high mountain summits,
In a broad mid daylight, he left us mournful!
Why didn't he seek my permission before undertaking such a hazardous journey?
Of course, he consoled me with a warm kiss on my forehead!
I wish I could see him as early as possible).

To quote Lawrence:

> The Kashmiri wife is a real helpmate, and joint work and joint interest give rise to a camaraderie between man and wife which is very healthy.[83]

But the statement of Lawrence, when judged in the light of contemporary literature, falls short of merit and qualification. C A close scrutiny of Kashmiri folk tales tends us to hold that the relationship between the husband and wife was not exclusively one of the friendship, cordiality and mutual trust. We find scores of tales that predominantly feature the quarreling nature of their relationship. The details are not also wanting regarding the feminine frailty that often resulted in the litigations and the divorces.[84]

Moral Laxity

In an atmosphere of the political despondency, social degradation, physical-in security coupled with the feudal sensual tastes, one can not ignore altogether the presence of

licentious and scandalous traits among the Kshmiri women during the period under review.

The legacy of the Afghan rule characterized by the sensual make-up continued with redoubled vigour during the Sikh and the Dogra Rule.[85] Commenting on the licentious tastes of Afghan rulers Pundit Ramjoo Dhar states, 'No beautiful or married women could pass through streets unmolested'.[86]

Under abject poverty, a class of Kashmiri women did not hesitate from exhibiting their bodily charms before the affluent traders and businessmen.[87] There existed a class of Kashmiri women who worked as professional prostitutes known as '*gani*' or *malzadis*'. During the Sikh period there sprang two colonies, one each at Guru Bazar and Shaheed Gunj that attracted ladies in anklets.[88] With the passage of time, these localities, during the period under reference became the main centers of flesh trade in Kashmir.[89] The notoriety of the trade assumed such a magnitude that folk bards composed satirical rhymes to express their indignation against the institution. See for example;

Yi duniya chi Narsingh garch malzat,
Akis sethy doweh tei akis sethy rath.
(The world is like a Narsinghgarh flesh women at sale,
To live with one during day and with the other during the night).

These girls, according to G.T.Vigne, were not only used by the Sikhs for their own entertainment,[90] but also for all those travelers who visited valley during the period of our study. To quote P.N.Bazaz:

> When the land was overrun by the armies of Mughals, Afghans ans Sikhs, women suffered along with all other people. Men took advantage of chaotic political conditions to enslave women. Hence from the very beginning the oppression was the common lot of women in Kashmir but in the first half of the nineteenth century it touched its highest magnitude.[91]

Equally yet another saddest aspect of Kashmiri society was the trafficking[92] in women. Victor Jacqumount who visited the valley during the Sikh rule reports "Girls were sent to outside the state to stock the harems of Musalman, Sikhs and the

Hindus".[93] To quote W.G.Osborne, "Ranjit Singh received beautiful girls as a tribute from Kashmir"[94]. According to J.Wolf, "The women were sold and purchased like pieces of bread".[95] Jacquemont gives the horrifying details of Kashmiri girls at sale. He writes:

> All little girls who promised to turn out pretty were sold at eight years of age and taken to the Punjab and other parts of India. Their parents sold them for a petty sum of fifty to sixty rupees.[96]

But the investigations reveal that the trade was exclusively run by the members of the *Wattal* community.[97] I had a chance to listen few lines of a satirical song at village 'Pohru' during my field survey, which also refers to the same fact. The few lines of the song are recorded here for reference.

Asmane vesi na trath watlan tei,
nani vane koriyan karan bapaar.
laanet vasan ma chak gaanen tei,
nani vaani koryan karaan bapaar.
Mand chaan machik dralez khenesei,
Koriyn sozan vech te Punjab.
Ras kiya chi lagan tchor patchan tei,
nani vane koriyan karan bapaar.
(Let the houses of the wattals be reduced
to ashes due to fire!
Because, they publicly put their daughters on sale.
They deserve extreme degree of disgrace and curse,
Because, they publicly put their daughters on sale.
The persons involved in the trade get huge money as
a commission charge,
By sending the little girls to the plains of Punjab.
The money they receive in the exchange,
They spend on drinking and dancing).

G.T.Vigni and Fredrick Drew also attest this observation. To quote vigne, "The girls of the *wattal* tribe were mainly sold and sent as slaves to the Punjab".[98]

With the passing of political fortunes of the state from the Sikhs to the Dogras in 1846, the valley witnessed no significant change in the attitudinal make-up of the aristocratic circle. Kashmiri beauty continued to lure the aristocratic craze.

The institution of *Hafiza* which one symbolized the mark of civility and aristocratic etiquette degenerated into brothel during the rule of Jammu Dogras.[99] In close proximity to the official Dogra quarter at Srinagar, Maisuma emerged as one of the major spots of flesh trade in Kashmir.[100] In the thirties of the present century the infamous trade outraged the citizens so much that one man, Muhammad Sabhan, a barber by profession launched a one-man but fierce fight against it and subsequently, it was banned in 1934. Here I quote few lines of one of the popular folk song, Sabhana sung in condemnation to the prostitutes of Maisuma.

Pump shus shubina yiman gane delenei,
Gane byol gatenei galenei aav.
Navi chane kanh yiwan pranieu hyot tscelnuy,
Gane byol gatenei galenei aav.
(It does not behave proper for prostiutes
to wear pump shoes,
The infamous institution shall be soon uprooted from
the soil of Kashmir.
No, new prostitute takes admission in the brothel,
The infamous institution is about to die).

The last phase of the Dogra period was a witness to number of socio-religious reform moments, which intended among other things to liberate the Kashmiri women from the variety of abuses she had fallen into.[101]

Alongside the Christian women missionaries, the organization known as "Fraternity",[102] framed by progressive Kashmiri Pandits, played an important role for the overall welfare of Kashmiri women.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. "Women, Position in Society", *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol.XV, p.443.
2. Ved, Kumari Ghai,(tr.) *The Nilmata Purana* . Vol.I p.90.P.N.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasta*,p.3.
3. *Ibid.*

4. M.Ishaq Khan, *Kashmir's Transition to Islam*,p.245.
5. S.L.Shali, *Kashmir History and Archaelogy through the Ages,* p.287. According to Pt. Ramjoo Dhar, No beautiful or married women could pass through streets unmolested: *Kifiat-i-Intizam-i-Mulk-i-Kashmir*,f.4.
In Governor Abdullah Khan's time such incidents occurred very frequently. Syed Bazruk Shah raised his voice against the ruler Abdullah Khan but still the Afghan governor did not hesitate indulging in such activities. Moorcroft, *MS. EURD*-264.p.88.
6. Bazaz, Op.Cit.,p.242.
7. M.Y.Teng, *"Keshur Culture Luke Betan Hendis enes Manz"* in *Anhaar*, Kashmir Departure, pp.27-37.
8. J.H.Knowles, *Folk Tales of Kashmir*,p.172. "Two Brothers".
9. Moti Lal Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.4,p.39; Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth*, Vol.3,p.26.
10. The major Chunk of Kashmiri cradle Songs is composed in praise and appreciation of the male babies. There are few songs in all folk song collections that feature the parental concern and affection for female babies. The lines of the song under reference have been collected from Sakina of Dalgate. The oral recording of the song lies with the researcher.
11. Unpublished *Manzely Beth*, gathered from Shamima of Zooni Mar Soura Srinagar.
12. M.L.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth*, Vol.3,p.44.
13. Unpublished *Wanvun* collected from Haproo Batapora, a village situated about thirty Kilometers away from Srinagar.
14. J.H.Knowles, Op.Cit. "All for Painsa" p.147. Walter Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p.267. According to Bazaz:

> It was an unusual sight to see a boy..... unmarried at the age of fifteen, custom disapproved of keeping a girl under parental roof after she had passed twelve summers of life. It was a sin to have a virgin of marriageable age in house".

Daughters of vitasta, p.221.

15. Mar Walter Del, *The Romantic East*, p.177. The writer holds that girls are married as early as the age of seven and the co-habition is general at twelve and some times as early as nine. Also seen Pt. Anand Koul, *The Kashmiri Pundit*, p.32.

16.This song was revealed to me by a young lady Zamrooda, at village Bandipora, District Baramulla. The song is put to record for the first time. It is not referred to in any of the folk song collections.

17.Source same.

18.The different expression in the context under reference stand for innocent, delicate and minor girls who are yet to reach the puberty age. In *Wanvun* songs, Kashmiri girls often use these expressions to register their silent protest against their family elders.

19. Saqi, Op.Cit.,p.109.

20.G.N.Atish, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.8, p.121; *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.4, p.31,40,51,60; J.H.Knowles, Op.Cit,p.29; Nishal Ansari, *Keshiri Luke Kathe,* Vol.4,p.81; Tyndale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sun Light and Shade,* pp.132-133; S.N.Dhar, *Tales of Kashmir,* p.280; "Told by Rahti", Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir,* 269; Brides did not generally see their bridegrooms before the marriage occasion. Sant Ram Dogra, Op.Cit., pp.7-9; Parbway Florence- *The Emerald Set with the Pearls*, p.67.

21.Very often extreme poverty led parents to marry their daughters to aged and ailing persons despite the girl's unwillingness. The unmatching alliance is often made subject of great ridicule and contempt by the sensible womenfolk in *wanvun* songs. See how a Kashmiri girl in one of the folk tales expresses her mind on such unhealthy conjugal alliance.

"My mother is old, she is bent on having my betrothal performed with an old man, who had already lost his teeth and has three wives. He is no doubt, rich; he will pay her one thousand rupees for me and he will arrange the wedding on our side-it is too bad".

S.N.Dhar, *Tales of Kashmir*, "Robin Hood of Kashmir", p.121.

22.Bazaz, Op.Cit.,p.221. Kashmiri Pandits considered the early marriage of the children not only a proper discharge of a religious duty but as one bringing credit to the family which practiced. See Anand Koul, *The Kashmir Pundit,* p.32.
23.Lawrence, *Valley*,Op.Cit, pp.267.
24.Bazaz, Op.Cit., pp.202-205.
25.Ibid., p.221.
26.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,*Vol.4,p.254.
27. Farooq Fayaz, "Causes of Muslim Backwardness in the Domain of Education", paper presented in a seminar organised by Kashmir Research Foundation at State Institute of Education. See also Bazaz, Op.Cit.,p.24.
28.Kashmiri Folk literature particularly folk tales abound in references regarding the anti-ethical pursuits of Kashmiri women who were wedded against their wishes. For example see "Vendetta", *Tales of Kashmir*, p.259. S.N.Dhar, *Keshir Luke Beth*, Vol.8,p.262. *Kkeshiri Luke Kethe,* Vol.2,p.12.
29.Anhar, Luke Adab Number, "*Keshur Culture Luke Betan Hendis Enes Manz*" p.37.
30.Farooq Fayaz, "Keshri Zanane Kesheren Luke Betan Manz", talk presented from Radio Kasmir Srinagar. Audio recording vide tape No. SR/= 3780/. Programme *Saqafat.*
31.These folk explanations qualify the equality of economic status and position. Among the lower middle Muslim families in Kashmir, preference in the process of matrimonial selection was given to the family of equal socio-economic level and position.
32.The assertion that polygamy was common in Kashmir during the period under review falls short of merit and qualification on the ground that it was affected almost in a situation of dire socio-emotional need. Even in Muslim elite families, it was treated as an ani-ethical exercise to go for second marriage in presence of the first wife unless conditioned by unavoidable need and necessity. The economic poverty that was the general rule during the period of our study could have never allowed people particularly belonging to middle or lower rung of the society to go for more than one spouse.
33.In a feudal set-up, the existence of co-wives generally stands for economic wellbeing and aristocratic taste. In the grip

of psychological predominance, the lower strata always attempted to barrow the social niceties of their overlords ,that is why we find in abundance the expression "*Sowan*" in vernacular. The frequent usage of the word may be taken as a corrective against any unforeseen emotional imbalance that is generally caused by the presence of a co-wife in any family composition.

34.G.T.Vigne, *Travels*, Vol.2 p.143. Also see Peer Hassan Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hassan,* Vol.II. p.227. R.K.Parimu, *A History of Muslim Ruk In Kashmir*, p.439.

35.A.L.Basham, *The Wonder That Was India,* p.179.Purdah in the local expression does not only mean a special garment to cover the face of a Muslim women, it in the wider sense of the term is mostly used for *Sharmo-Haya* or unpublic image of the Muslim woman. In tune with the Muslim elite culture, Kashmiri aristocratic Pandits also adopted a type of concealment for their ladies in the wake of the Muslim rule in Kashmir. It was done more under the aristocratic craze than by any religious merit or necessity. That is why Moorcroft and Vigne do not support the theory that Hindu women also adopted *Purdah* during the period under reference. Moorcroft, Travels, Vol.11, p.131. G.T.Vigne, *Travels*, Vol.II, p.143.

36.Ibid.

37.Ibid.

38.The recording of the song is preserved in Radio Archives library vide SR/=7421. Programme *Nagme vuzen Neeryn te Nayen.*

39.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.V.p.21.

40.This is evidenced by number of Kashmiri working songs (*Kami Kareky beth)* published in various folk song collections. Ballads like *Greesy Koer, Krale Koer, Pehely Koer,* etc. etc. also attest our assertion that Kashmiri women actively shared the socio-economic responsibility in the Kashmiri family life. Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth*, Vol.4.p.65. G.N.Atish, Op.Cit.,p.231. See for elaborate detail Various Trades in Kashmir, Op.Cit.,1078-1781.

41.Famous Kashmiri folk singer Gulam Mohammad Dar of Sathu Bagwanpora, Bar Bar Shah who had the privilege of presenting this folk balled in Uzbikistan Russia during one of

his cultural trips, revealed to me that this *Chakri* song was highly applauded by the Uzbek people present in the auditorium.

42.S.N.Dhar, "Benediction" *Tales of Kashmir,* p.146. J.H.Knowes, "A Stupid Boy" *Folk Tales of Kashmir.* p.189. Naeve. E.F., *Beyond the Pir Punjal*, p.240.

43,G.N.Atish, Op.Cit., p.117.

44.These folk saying which are in circulation even today are suggestive of the teasing and taunting behaviour of the family members towards the widow.

45.Sources at hand reveal that widows in Muslim families often preferred to look after their minor children than to go for remarriage. Such widows were held in high esteem. To earn their livelihood and support the dependents, these widows often resorted to the occupation of maiden servants in the well-off familiesof Kashmiri Pandits and the Muslim well off families. For reference see Knowles, Op.Cit.,p.189. Saqi, Op.Cit., Vol.III, p.21; B.A.Dabla, *Working Women in Kashmir,* p.33. Verma Mathur, *Position of Women in Ancient and Medieval Kashmir,* Unpublished Ph.D.thesis, submitted to the Jammu University.

46.Ibid.

47.Since Kashmir was famous all over the world for the delicate and finest texture and embroidery work of Shawl, it as such accomodated good number of female folk in the working of spinning. The destitute and forlorn Kashmiri women often learned their bread by working from dawn to dusk at the spinning wheel. In the time of distress and agony, the spinning wheel served as the soul trustworthy companian of Kashmiri women. Kashmiri women's unbroken emotional alliance with the wheel has given birth to scores of touching folk wheel songs of Kashmiri literature. These wheel songs (Yendre Nagme) contain the inner pain and the pulse of Kashmiri women. See for example:

tose mey kotmei ha yendro,
lose nev thas ha myne yendro,
rafaqash Tchei chuhum ha yendro
jafaqash Tchei chuhum ha yendro
geen geen mo kar myani yendro

(I have delicately spin the best quality of the shawl wool,
The dawn to dusk engagement with the spinning wheel has exhausted all my bodily energy.
Oh! my wheel, you are the only companion of my broke life!
My wheel is my only source of sustenance,
It does not look nice that my wheel will give a disturbing sound).

In Moorcraft's estimation there was about 100,000 women engaged in spinning wool till late in the night. Moorecraft William, MSEURD.264, p.43.

48.The barren woman is believed to be inauspicious and is despised. In various Kashmiri sayings and proverbs, we find tearing references to the sad plight of the barren women. The barrenness of woman in Kashmiri Muslim families often led the couple for adoption. The institution though not in tune with the Islamic spirit, was well adhered to for obvious reasons during the period under debate. Adoption is of Hindu origin and has been maintained among the Mohammadans in spite of all the bigoted attacks against this institution for the last six hundred years. The Zamindars of the valley still think an adopted son as good as heir as a real son. See for detailed information A.H.Ahanger, *Customary Succession Among Muslims in Kashmir*, pp.195-197. Also see Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.III, p.121. Ashan, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.III, p.117.

49.Different oral sources tend us to suggest that most of the divorce cases that occurred in Muslim Kashmiri families happened more due to the machinations of *Hash* and *Zaam.*

50.There is a practice prevalent even today in Kashmir that the barren ladies are advised by their well-wishers to pay a visit to the shrine of Baba Payam-ud-Din at Tangmarg (Gulmarg). The concerned ladies plaster the mud *dan* (stove) of the shrine in a most purified way with the hope of being blessed with the off spring. After the wish is fulfilled, the concerned family members find themselves bound to visit the shrine with some offerings in the shape of sheep, jewelry or cash.

51.Saqi, Op.Cit.,p.168.

52.Bazaz, Op.Cit.,p.201. Anand Koul, *The Kashmiri Pandit,* p.32.Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir,* p.296.

53.Widow in Hindu family did not engage herself in any recreational pursuit. Dubious, Op.Cit., pp.356-357. A.B.Bose and H.L.A.Sen, *Some Characteristics of the Widows in Rural Society, Man in India* No.466, pp.226-232." *The misery caused by this unnatural system of child widow hood can be better imagined than described and one of the saddest incidents of the cholera of 1890 is the number of girls who were left widows*",Neve, E.F., *Beyond the Pir punjal*, p.240. Neve further states that:Hindu widows have no right to marry. She had therefore , to stay in the house of her father-in-law, taking advantage of her helplessness, she was often compelled to live an unholy life. The children born to them were thrown, it is said, either in a river or to the pariah dog at night.Neve, E.F., Op.Cit.,p.240.

54.The object of the institution seems not to secure any religious benefit for the soul of the appointer but to obtain a practical and temporal benefit. Altaf Ahangar, *Customary Succession Among Muslims*, p.197.

55.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.4.,.90.

56.M.A.Ahangar, Op.Cit., p.197.

57.G.N.Atish, Op.Cit., p.97.

58.Shad Ramzan, *Keshiren Luke Betan Hund Intikhab,* p.64.

59.Saqi, Op.Cit., Vol.4, p.62.

60.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.III, p.115.

61.Woaremej (Step Mother) as elsewhere, in Kashmiri literature too is generally painted in the grey colour. I could not find the "saying" refereed to in the contextin any of the folk saying collection, but it was aired to me by one Salam Ganai Tchoka pora, Tehsil Chadora during one of my field trip to that village.

62.Knowles, Op.Cit.,p.202.

63.Nishat Ansari, *Keshri Luke Kathe,* Vol.4, p.96. Saqi, Op.Cit.,Vol.3, p.115,117,184.

64.Ibid., p.21.

65.In Kashmiri ballads and lyrical songs, the *Hash* appears to be intent on injuring the feelings of *Nosh* in various ways. Atish, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.9, p.51,92,111. Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.4, p.29,71,95,96,99...

66.Saqi, Op.Cit., p.73;G.N.Nazir, *Keshir Luke Beth,* p.44.

67.G.N.Atish, (I) *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.8, p.85.
68.This song was collected from Batapora, Zakoora. It is unpublished and put to record for the first time in the dissertation at hand.
69.Farooq Fayaz, "*Keshri Zanane Luke Betan Manz*", Radio talk, vide programme *Saqafat*, Radio Kashmir Srinagar.
70.M.L.Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth*, Vol.III, p.115.
71.In almost all genres of Kashmir folk literature "*beeykaakany*" (Brother's wife) has been shown as nursing grudge against the brothers and sisters of her husband.
72.This song I gathered from a lady namely Saida from Sheikhpora village, falling in district Pulwama. The village is some forty-five kilometres away from Srinagar and is situated on the banks of Ranbi Ara Shupian. The song is not published in any folklore collection.
73.Source ,the same.
74.Source,the same.
75.Nishat Ansari, Op.Cit., p.97.
76.This song was transmitted to me by Abdul Khaliq Thukeroo of village Jamnagri Tehsil Shupian.
77.In comparison to urban woman, the woman as a wife in Kashmiri peasant society was often made subject to humiliation and disgrace. There are different reasons that have been already dealt in the body content of the chapter under debate.
78.This information was given to me by Gulla Wani, aged 92 at his residance Narbal Srinagar. The photograph of the narrator is enclosed with the dissertation. The information conveyed has been further substantiated by one lady, namely Azi of Bagwanpora Sathu, who now resides at Badshah Nagar, Nowgam.
79.J.H.Knowles,Op.Cit., p.75; *Kashmir Today*, Vol.II, p.117; M.I.Khan, *History of Srinagar,* p.111.
80.Quoted in *Europeans on Kashmir*; Shafi Shauq and others, p.117.
81.Saqi, Op.Cit., Vol.3, p.80.
82.Shad Ramzan, Op.Cit., p.77.
83.Quoted in *Europeans on Kashmir*, p.181.
84.Vigne, Vol.II, p.85; G.Forester, Op.Cit., Vol.II, P.22; J.Wolf, Op.Cit., p.408; Brinkman, Wrongs in Kashmir, Op.Cit.,

p.32; Saif-ud-din, Roznameha, Vol.VI, dated 15th September, 1853, f.104; Saqi, Op.Cit., Vol.III, p.242; J.H.Knowles, *Folk Tales of Kashmir* (A Strange Request), p.227; S.N.Dhar, Tales of Kashmir (The Ear Rings).

85.RobertThorp, *Cashmere Misgovernment*, p.70.

86.Ramjoo Dhar, *Kafiat-i- Intizam-i- Mulk-i-Kashmir*, Op.Cit.,f.4.

87.G.T.Vigne, Op.Cit., Vol.II, p.85. For the entertainment of the traders there existed a class of public women congregated in Srinagar. These indulged freely in vices. See for details, Moti Chandra, *Courtesans of Medieval India*, pp.180-185.

88.Sheeraza (Eng.). "Photo feature:Kashmiri Songstress", p.98.

89.Ibid. M.Y.Teing. M.I.Khan, *History of Srinagar*, p.97.

90.Vigne, Op.Cit., Vol.II, p.85.

91.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasta*, p.91,93,193.

92.Joseph wolf, Travels of Joseph Wolf, p.396.

93.Jacquemont Victor Letters, p.70,215.

94.W.G.Osborne, Op.Cit., pp.85-86.

95.Joseph Wolf Op.Cit., p.396.

96.Victor Jacquemont, OP.Cit., p.215.

97.This trade was generally carried out by the people belonging to Wattal tribe of Kashmir. The main centres of trade in women were Lahore and Ludhaina. Even the European Travellers indulged in this immoral trade. See also Henry Thoby Princep-History of the Punjab, Vol.II, pp.165-169. Sohan Lal Suri, Umdat-u-Tawaraikh, Vol.II, p.261.

98.Vigne, Op.Cit., p.216.

99.Sheeraza (Eng) Op.Cit., p.99. M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., p.113.

100.Ibid. Biscoe,*Autobiography*,pp.29-60.

101.Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.79. *Keshur Samacher*, May 1980, Vol.XV, No.5 pp.2-3.

102.Bazaz, *Daughters of Vitasta*, p.210. Dermont Norris, *Kashmir The Switzerland of India*, p.9.

CHAPTER IV

Folk Beliefs and Practices

Though the Islamic influence had started being felt in Kashmir as early as the beginning of the eighth century,[1] but it did not make much headway until the first quarter of the 14th century.[2] It took Islam almost six centuries to secure a strong foot-hold in Kashmir. The latest investigations in the field reveal that Brahminism continued to be the religion of the masses even after the establishment of the Muslim Sultante in Kashmir.[3]

No doubt, the mountain bound valley of Kashmir remained unexposed to the military exploits of the Muslim conquerors, but nothing such could deter the zealous Muslim saints, scholars and missionaries from Persia and Central Asia to penetrate into the 'Paradise of East' to acquaint the locals with new religeo-cultural facets and ideas of Islam. It was in fact, the role played by these foreign Muslim missionaries that helped in creating a situation-conducive for the propagation of teaching of Sufi oriented new religion in the Valley.[4] Since the majority of the Muslim missionaries who poured into the valley in the fourteenth and fifteenth century belonged to Persia, Bukhara and other parts of the Central Asia, their religious outlook was predominantly fashioned by humanistic approach.[5] This was indeed, as for more than two hundred years Islam had, in the Central Asia and Persia, been similarly influenced by the dogmas of Mahayana Buddhism and Upanishadic philosophy, resulting in the cult of Islamic mystics.[6] Fortunately the new religion entered the Valley in the form, being carried there by elightened Sufis like Bul Bul Shah.[7] With their humanistic approach to religion, they found a ready and sympathetic response from the Kashmiris, already permeated with the teachings of mystic saints and '*peers*'.

The celebrated Sufis who had come with a mission, after observing deep commitment of the people towards their age old social traditions and cultural traits did not offend them by suggesting drastic changes in their socio-religio-cultural fabric; instead, they allowed the new converts to retain some of the old traditions and customs of their erstwhile religions which in the course of time were assimilated in the religious life of the Muslims.[8] This, indeed, resulted in the development of somewhat, unique features in the socio-religious history of the Muslims in a geographically isolated region, thus drawing a striking contrasts with the Muslims of the other parts of the world.[9]

It was during this period of historical transition that the need was felt to retain the religio-cultural identity of the valley. Thanks to its rich religious and philosophic traditions, Kashmiris rose to the occasion and produced a roll of distinguished mystics and saints who by dint of their personal merit and noble deeds proved to be the living embodiments of Kashmiri culture and religion.[10]

Prominent among them were 'Lal Ded'[11] and 'Sheikh Nur-ud-din.[12] If on the one hand, Lal Ded reaffirmed her faith in the teachings of Kashmiri Shavism, Sheikh Nur-din revived the indigenous mystic cult '*Rishyut*'[13] and expressed his firm faith in the relevance of the Rishi order. Though with different approaches, both were united in their fight against the priviledged religious elite, and their support for the under-priviledged. So deep was their influence on the minds of the people and that of the age that major portion of Kashmiri folk poetry is dedicated to their exemplary contribution towards the development of religion and culture.[14] To quote Ishaq Khan, "Lalla's verses against the social and spiritual pretensions of the Brahmans set in motion new forces rejecting the latter's cherished idea that social status was determined by caste."[15] With equally vehemence, Sheikh Nur-ud-din denounced the Muslim *ulema*, proud of their rich pedigree and descent. Nur-ud-din's condemnation of Mulhas and Lal Ded's hatred towards Pandit Brahmans (both priviledged sections of the society) was infact the exposition of their intense urge to see that the unpriviledged or common folk come forward to shape

their destinies themselves. It is this association of the two eminent religious personalities of the medieval Kashmir with the common masses that played vital role in fashioning the distinctive collective religious behaviour of the people of Kashmir.

The Muslim 'Rishis' of Kashmir adopted certain practices, which if analysed in the light of '*Sharia'* seemed as completely unislamic, but the serious study of the '*Rishi*' practices reveal that these practices echoed Kashmiri's deep commitment to his distinctive social cultural milieu, which even the great tradition could not eradicate. To quote Mohib-ul-Hassan, "popular Islam in Kashmir thus became diluted with foreign elements, and their character it has retained until today".[16] Commenting on the religious synthesis, R.K.Parimoo holds, "History has perhaps very few examples of a people, numerically so small, who have in the course of long succession of centuries suffering and struggle, so paid so high a price in order to preserve their ancient traditions and culture."[17]

The assertion of a European Traveller seems quite plausible that "the traveler finds himself face to face with three cultures and religious systems of Asia living side by side. These are Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim. The distinctive characteristic of Kashmir is that these three stages are not merely stages in its past history but are living as co-extant forces"[18]. A scholar finds all these traits and characteristics in the popular religion practised by the majority of the common folk.

What is Folk Religion?

The primary justification for the discipline known as folk religion is that it raises the important question of what religion is? Whether or in what ways the religious dimension is important? What place and function religion has in human life generally and what justification there is, if any, in the claim that religion discloses to us something essential about the human condition.

Apart from all these controversial shades resulting out of the different propositions of religion, one thing is certain that the knowledge which is the subject matter of elite religion or great tradition is not somewhat that is demanded with accuracy in

common religion[19] or in folk religion. The folk religion takes into account the social, cultural and physical environment. It is based on the observed phenomenon of religion. The fact for example, that men do believe and believe sometimes most tenaciously and nobly and that their beliefs have social approval and consequence. In that sense religion exists as an observable fact of human life for which there is plenty of folk and popular evidence.[20]

In folk religion people associate immediate goals with any particular activity.[21] After all, a large part of human society consists on a satisfaction of material needs.[22] If a rice farmer believes that he will increase the yield of his land by visiting any shrine or a sacred place at the time of ploughing and sowing, he will do that. There is sufficient evidence to show that the people visit different religious places likely to prey for the curing of disease or to fulfill other material ends. This and hundreds of activities of a similar kind and motive and at comparable level are what religion has meant to many, if not the majority of the people.

If all these kinds of activities and the beliefs which are associated with them are excluded from the domain of religion but then what name are they to be known with? If we are to reserve religion to mean only fundamental, orthodox and conservative concerning with the eternal unchanging and approved by elite and literate, than we have to find another word we can use in order to refer to all other much more temporal and mundane beliefs, desires, activities which form the basis of folk religion.[23] Let us for a moment allow that all these, too can be called religion we now have two reference whenever we use the word religion. At one level, religion means concern with a distinct idea or eternal good. At another level it means concern with ever-present mundane needs.[24] The only justification for using the same word for both is that there is some connection between the two. Let us suppose that the word religion can be used for both; it is still evident that we shall have to put some kind of adjective in front of the word religion in each case. The second obviously will be folk religion Suffice to say that there are two levels of religion, the upper level, which expresses itself in terms of what is generally

regarded as orthodoxy, which include orthodox beliefs and orthodox practices. This is the kind of religion which orthodox religious authorities prescribe to be followed and then there is the lower level, which expresses itself spontaneously in folk beliefs and practices of all kinds. The existence of these two levels has been observed in almost all religions.[25]

In short, folk religion in a simple version may be termed that shade of popular religion that is generally characterized by folk practices and customs socially approved and which over dominates reason, faith and conviction. In case of Muslims, the latter type of religion is governed by the Quranic injections and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). The *sunna* and *shariat* govern the life system and the mental make-up of the faithful. Here a person enjoys no liberty to deviate from the fundamental principles. Any deviation from the '*sunna*' is described as '*kufr*', '*shirk*' and '*bida*' and subject to serve punishment in accordance with the injections of the Quran.[26]

Contrary to this, in folk religion there exists a variety of cherished local cultural beliefs and practices, originating from different religious sources and social systems dully approved and recognized by the society.

Chief Characteristics of Folk Religion in Kashmir

One of the striking characteristics of popular Islam in Kashmir is the loud group recitation of an *Aurad-i-Fatthiyya*[27] by the majority of the Kashmiri Muslims in mosques immediately after the morning prayers. The pioneers in the formative phase of the history of Islam in Kashmir in the fourteenth century as mentioned earlier, reconciled itself to and without disturbing the socio-religio cultural fabric of the society, a legacy of the Hindu Buddhist religious systems. As a result of the compromising attitude especially demonstrated by scholarly saint Syed Mir Ali Hamadani, the neo-converts were allowed to retain some of the traditions of their former religions that in the course of time were assimilated in the religious culture of the Muslims.[28]

It had been the age old practice of Hindus in the valley to recite mantras loudly in the temples especially in the early

morning hours. Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, who had a keen anthropological, sense understood the efficacy of the popular mode of social behaviour, drafted a unique prayer under the title of *Aurad-i-Fatthiyya.* He allowed the new converts to recite it in chorus loudly to lessen the captivating effect of the Hindu mantras Ishaq Khan while appreciating the wisdom of Mir Hamadani writes, "It goes to his (Mir Ali Hamadani) credit that instead of taking a narrow view of the religious situation in Kashmir, he showed an acute discernment and a keen practical sense in grasping the essential elements of popular Kashmiri religious culture and ethos, and gave creative expression to these in enjoining his followers in the valley to recite 'Aurad-i-Fatthiyya' aloud in a chorus in mosques".[29]

Such a simple practice of invoking God's help did not call for either animal sacrifice or the beating of drums as it was in the case of Kashmiri Pandits. The lud recitation of '*Auradh*'produced such an appealing effect in the minds of Hindus that they willingly came forward to embrace Islam. While showing regard for the local religious ethos in allowing neo-Muslims to read *Aurad-i-Fatthiyya* aloud in chorus, the Sayyid, according to Khan, "demonstrated a keen sense of practical wisdom and judgement in laying a firm foundation for the gradual assimilation of the folk in Islam.[30] A conservative chronicler like Srivara seems to have been so impressed by the novelty of God being praised collectively by the rich and the poor together that he could not conceal his feelings about the loud prayers of the faithful in the Jamia mosque of Srinagar. Thus he writes, "It was here that the Yavanas (Muslims) chanted mantras and looked graceful like thousand lotuses with humming bees"[31].

Right from the time the prayer was drafted by the exalted scholar saint, the tradition of reciting the prayer loudly in Kashmir mosques continued with the same vigour and zeal. Its continuance, no doubt, provide an index of the commitment of the people to the deep rooted popular tradition and their cultural psyche. By providing a folk orientation, to the new message of Islam in Kashmir, Mir Ali Hamadani not only made Islam intelligible to the majority of the common folk, but it provided a tremendous pshycho-religious comfort to the neo-

Muslims seemed to be unwilling to dissociate themselves compledley from their ancestral religious behaviour.[32]

No doubt, during the concluding phase of our period of study, the practice of reciting the '*Auradh*' came under sharp criticism by the leaders and the followers of *Ahl-i-Hadith* movement who dubbed it as an activity with no cemented religious foundation. But the majority of the Muslims in the valley could not succumb to their pressure and the practice continued and remained in tredition. The popular love and the people's attachment to this folk religious practice can be well ascertained from these lines of Kashmiri folk song.

Bed dargah khanaqah, terwei
Teti Aurad bedi bedi pervei
Temi angane berkat servei
Bed dargah khanqah, terwei
Teti Aurad bedi bedi pervei.[33]

(Let us flock to the shrine of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani situated at Khanqah-i-Maula, Let us recite 'Aurad' loudly but in an impressive tune.
It is, of course, the gifted spot.
It abounds in saintly blessing.
The shrine of Khanqah- i-Maula is a place of unimaginable veneration).

Saint Worship

Since Isalm in Kashmir was introduced and popularized by Sufi saints belonging to different Sufi orders, as a natural response, people of the land developed an intimate love and reverence for these exalted saints[34]. True to the tradition, Kashmiris in a new scheme of religious framework sought to find new parallels to their age-old traditional gods and deities that once governed their religion behaviour. These parallels they found in the form of venerated saints,who not only acquainted them with the new religious order but provided them certain degree of liberty to remain attached with their traditional religious behavioural pattern. The love of the masses towards their spiritual preceptors did not remain applicable as long as they were alive but it continued even after their death. The same is evident from the fact that hardly in the valley one

could find a village town or a city without a 'Sufi' or 'Reshi' shrine.[35]

To my understanding, a close net work of shrine and tombs and their veneration by the common masses was not only prompted by the traditional religious behaviour of the people but the study of the folk material tends us to suggest that the institution was more necessitated by a unique political situation which robbed the masses of their right of self expression and the dignity of the soul. From the content of the variety of the Kashmiri folk songs, the researcher could easily deduce that the people flocked to these shrines to give vent to their suppressed feelings and emotions, a situation that could hardly be availed outside the shrine premises. A close network of official secret agencies, had sealed every chance for poor Kashmiris to present their grievances before their authorities, regarding the fleecing devices of the corrupt officialdom;[36] hence, they found no other way to revenge the misdeeds of these rapacious officials and the ruling elite, but to present themselves in a shrine and invoke the help of the dead saint with the hope of being relieved from the recurring pain and distress. To quote M.Y.Teing , "In a state of utter confusion, insecurity and mass alienation, these shrines and tombs were acknowledged as the befitting spots by the commoners to address their gravest problems"[37]. Though, Lawrence, in his monumental work *The valley of Kashmir* has given an elaborate detail of the institution, but the celebrated writer has not kept in sight the psycho-political necessities, which gave an additional importance to these shrines to serve as the sanctuaries of public grievance and protest. The argument is further substantiated by the following folk verses much in circulation among the rural masses even today:

dam phuty gemety seene chi seni
Ya Nabi zeeri seni boz
Dedy kas bavav ger chim seri
Ya Nabi zeri seni boz.
Dastgir Sebs Shahi Bhagdadas
Ash chem. Seri gam kasyum
Halam heth darasm'naz khaneyeri
Ya Nabi zeri seni boz.

Shahi Hamadanes beni Islams
Sar bo Travas dedey tal
Vedy tas seni hal cha seri
Ya Nabi zeri seni boz
Makhdom Sebs Shahi Sultans,
Thazres shuban ches dargah
Dowak ma kanh asi zulman meri
Ya Nabi zeri seni boż
Sheikh Seb Alamdar Tchrar chu sonei
Moyen hal chus sorei son,
Mele chu logmut Tchrar bresveri
Ya Nabi zeri seni boż.[38]

(We feel soulless in an atmosphere of gloom and disrespect,
Oh, Nabi, (the messager of God) we beg you to give patient hearing to our sufferings.
{Whom shall we express our pains?
The people who possess authority and power are all strangers).
Dastagir, the crown of Bhagadad,
We expect, visit to you shrine
Situated at Khanayar,
Shall bring relief to over distresses.
Glory of Hamadan, (Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani)
The founder of Isalm in Kashmir
We will pay homage at the outer shrine gate
He is aware of our sufferings
Let us remind him the same.
Mukhdoom Sahab, the king of sultans,
His shrine at the Hari parbat hillock
gives a majestic look,
We look friendless-no one is ready
to share our ailments,
We beg for your spiritual help.
Sheikh Nur-ud-din at Tsrar,
is our unquestioned religious leader
who says? He is not aware of our lot.
The annual fair has begun there at Tchrar,
Let us flock to the shrine on Thursday
and seek the blessings of the pir.}

In Islam, and precisely on the background of monotheism, there always seems to have been a radical conflict between popular customs and the official religious orthodoxy. Such practices on the level of local population were either

considered old superstitions or condemned as '*bida*', or unorthodox innovations. To quote Goldziher, "In no other field has the original doctrine of Islam subordinated itself to such a degree to the needs of its confessors as in the fields of veneration of saints".[39] In fact, the saint worship constituted the major feature of popular Islam not only outside the Arab peninsula but inside the Arab lands also. It remined the major concern of the champions of the orthodox Islam.[40] The religious humanism, exhibited by the venerated saints through their deeds and teachings helped tremendously in creating a religious atmosphere guaranteed maximum degree of liberty not only to the neo Muslims but even to the people who clung to their ancestral religion. This new proposition, in context of Kashmir proved very fruitful in strengthening the basis of folk religion in Kashmir. This is further evidenced by the fact that the shrines of Mir Sayyid[41] Ali Hamadani, Sheikh Nur-ud-din,[42] Baba Payam-ud-din[43], Baba Zain-ud-din[44] and other sufi and Rishi saints are equally kept in high esteem and veneration by both Muslim and Hindu devotees.

As the dominant characteristic of folk religion has always been to seek the fulfillment of the immediate material wishes[45], the people in the valley too visited different Sufi and Rishi shrines for fulfilling their material gains. An attentive examination of the folk material particularly, the folk literature, tend us to hold that a peasant here too, like his fellow brethren in the rest of the world, visited the shrines with the hope that he might receive good harvest; barren women flocked to the tomb with the purpose that they might be blessed with a child; a sick went with the hope that he might regain health and so on.[46] In addition to this, Kashmiri folk songs reveal that women folk, during the period of our study visited the tombs of the dead saints to invoke their help for the safe arrival of their dear ones who had either been driven away from their fields to undertake the forced labour (*begaar*) or had proceeded voluntarily to the plains of Punjab at the outset of the winter season to earn the necessary livelihood for their family members and other dependents. In the following lines of a Kashmiri folk song, a forlorn Kashmiri woman expresses her heart-felt concerns for the safe arrival of her dear one.

Sani gomai sir kas bavei,
Yene gomei tane nei amei,
Sane gomei bavei kas.
Lole astane tchengy bozalei,
Sane gomei bavei kas
Dur balan harde goyomei,
Sante ma veni dilbqr av,
Ashi Muqame phro bo zalei,
Sane gomei bavei kas.[47]

(I am grief stricken, with whom shall I share my pain!
Long time had lapsed, since he had left us.
I will kindle the earthen lamps at the shrine of the local pir,
I am grief stricken whom shall I convey my concerns.
At the very outset of the winter, he had gone across the high snow laden summits,
The spring has come-Not he!
I shall go to the shrine at Muqam,
There I will take part in the phrov,
I am grief stricken, with whom shall I share my pain).

The assertion of Dr. Dieter Sturm holds enough weight, particularly, against the folk religious environ of the Valley. He writes "The great tradition of the normative Islam has never recognized the existence of saints and has no procedure of canonizing them, yet saints (*awliya*) literally Gods prolege, fill the world of popular Islam, where even living saints possess supernatural powers and ability to perform miracles..... The saints' supernatural powers (*baraka*) do not cease with his death, hence his tomb is considered as a repository of saint's *baraka*."

While evaluating the deep-rooted attachment of an average Muslim with the shrines, Lawrence remarks, "It was customary for almost all to visit a particular shrine on different occasions for the fulfillment of of wishes and cherished goals."[49]. Not only on the occasions of historical importance, the visit to the shrine was considered obligatory on the occasions like marriage and other related persuits. During the period under survey, the bridegroom would not rise above the age-old practise of going to pay respect to some neighbouring shrine before leaving for the bride's house.[50] See how in this below cited '*Wanvun song*', a bridegroom is advised by his

parents not to show the slightest degree of lapse in the traditional practice of showing reverence by visiting the shrine before leaving for his bride's home:

Astan atchevun sejde keryzium,
Kelymei Muhammad perizium.
Astan gathevun hirase keryzeim
Dechineidari tal duą mengyzeim
Astan ho chui nozuk jaye,
Ati ho aye qadam tulyze[51]

(Before you enter the shrine gate
Give a slight bend to your head as token of respect to the saint,
You should first recité 'Kalima',
Be attentive and exercise every caution infront of the grave of the saint.
You first straight way go to the window on the right,
To visit the shrine demands seriousness,
and sensitivity from the devotee.
Take your steps with utmost care)

Ernest. F.Neve gives a pen picture of the same, when a marriage party once inadvertently missed to salute the grave of a saint, situated on the way to the bride's house.

> I once saw a striking example of the danger of neglecting this rule. A marriage party was crossing a stream, above which stood the shrine of a saint. All of them dismounted and passed over the bridge, but the father of the bridegroom, with the bridegroom in his arms, rode boldly over. The bride broke, and the horse, father and son were precipitated into the stream, where they lay struggling. I ran up and rebuked the crowd for not assisting the sufferers, but they looked on gloomily and said, the man richly deserved his fate. After some trouble I induced some of my own people to disentangle the men from the horse, and then one of the attendants of the shrine explained to me that within the last ten years, four men who had despised the saint and had ridden over the bridge had been killed".[52]

On their visit to the shrines, village folk (both men and women) could gaze on the corner of the shrine where the saint was said to have spent some period in seclusion. They bowed their heads and with the hands often inter-locked prey in a standing position to enjoin the blessing of the saint.[53]

Not only the saints of the foreign origin were kept in high esteem, but also the shrines of the Rishis were equally kept in high admiration. The rural masses attached more significance to the shrines of the local Rishis than that of the saints of foreign origin. According to the folk belief which is even now in circulation in the vernacular, village-folk believe that whosoever visits the three venerated shrines of Rishis at Bumzo, Tsrar and Muqam, would be saved from the disastrous fire of the hell.

Yus getchi Bhumezu Tsrar Muqam,
Tas peth chu dozkhuṇ nar haram[54].

A close association of the general folk with the Rishi seems to be governed more by the historical forces according to which these saints exclusively identified themselves with the common folk as against the foreign saints who for greater part remained associated with the ruling aristocracy.[55] For commoners they symbolized as a bridge between the temporal religion and its folk orientation, rooted firmly in history and the traditions. This is also attested by the fact that the major portion of our folk poetry euogolises the merits of the local Rishi saints as compared to the saints who had come from different parts of Persia and Central Asia.[56]

Without entering into further debate the fact remains that Kashmiris developed a religious psyche, which while accommodating the foreign influences remained rooted in the ethos and the aesthetic sensibilities of the society and the same is expressed in different folk melodies like *rov* and *watsun*.

deshi gandeni (Tying of votiverags)

A remarkable feature of human society in almost every age has been the practice of tying or attaching ribbons or pieces of cloth to the windows, iron gates and the decorated walls of the shrine structures. To quote Michael Winter, "In this way the saint according to the believer was literally bound to the obligation to help the pilgrim in want. If the wish is fulfilled, the pilgrim in want accompanied by other family members and neighbours pays a special visit to the shrine, to offer the special prayers and gifts as a matter of gratitude. The pilgrim often

promised such a present to the saint beforehand on the condition of course that the latter helps him out"[57].

The remarks expressed by Winter regarding the tying of rags applies truly to the religious behaviour of Kashmiris, who believe that by tying cords, it becomes obligatory for a saint to fulfill the cherished desires of the devotee. The tying of cords had become so symbolic and archetypal practice that it not only became a subject of folk literature but it even found expression in the contemporary creative literature of the period under reference. For instance Maqbool Kralwari, the nineteenth century Kashmiri poet, says ,

me tshonduk baghu bustanan,
genjim dashe eshqe astanan.[58]

(I made a mad search to find you, in the beautiful gardens but in vain.
I went to the shrine of 'Love' to tie the cords so that my desires get fulfilled).

The *deshi* or white rags that are tied to the shrine are left there by the supplicants for offspring and till a child is born rag is left undisturbed.

Nazr-U-Niyaz

It constitutes as one of the major elements of saint-worship not only in Kashmir but in other parts of the world as well. '*Nazr*' as commonly practised is a self-imposed practice that a person makes with the supernatural. The supplicant, for example a barren woman, pledges to offer something valuable, if her wish is granted. Her gift to the shrine is conditioned on the ground that if her wish is not granted, she has no obligation to fulfill her '*Nazr*'. In other words, it is an exercise whereby hope is linked with action. The critics of the practice hold that the exercise acts as a challenge to the doctrine of divine will and predestiny. Contrary to this, '*Niyaz*' is not determined by any selfimposed condition but depends upon the goodwill of the supplicant. It may either be a follow up action, or a welcome gesture to forsee the successful culmination of the proposed desire or wise.

Wasila

Another common, though not essential element of '*Nazr*' is the use of an intercessory (*Wasila*) who is generally believed to have attained highest spiritual excellence through his exposition of character and merit. In Kashmir context, particularly during the period under discussion people were caught in such a situation of psycho-social crises, where no body could come forward to console the suffering masses. Hence, disillusioned at the discourteous behaviour of both official and religious classes, people flocked to the tombs of dead saints with the intention of receiving their help and aid in addressing their grievances ,before the supreme power i.e God. A careful study of *Manqabats*[60] belonging to the domain of folk literature, recited by the folk at the shrine and the mosques on Friday congregations and Urs days also reveal that in addition to gain a religious merit, people rushed to the shrines with the hope of being relieved of distresses and suffering caused by the unfriendly socio-political atmosphere. The same feeling is expressed in the following lines of a folk *Manqabat*.

Halam derith chi praran vony keriv imdad ai sultan,
Be kastan hund tehe chuk imdad, buzivdad ie sultan.
Gamav dadev dowakhu esy gir kerymety bozi kus sonei,
Chu derdil kus sana sonie keriv dil shad ae sultan.[61]
(We wait eagerly for your spritual help,
O, Sultan, (Sheikh Makhdoom Hamza)You are the true friend aid of unpriviledged and oppressed,
We are reduced to the lowest depths of penury due to disease, poverty and oppression, who will listen our woes?Our hearts are broken by unending gloom and grief, Would you like to bring, joy to our ailing souls).

The veneration of the saints often led the ignorant masses to resort to the practices that attracted the wrath of religious orthodoxy at the latter stage of our period of study. But the practices like moving repeatedly around the grave of a dead saint, smearing body and face with the dust at the shrine, making a bend of the body at the shrine entry point and keeping a face towards the grave of the saint at the departing time still continues, though with little intensity, even today.

The adherence of the commoners to this practice may also be gleaned from this verse of a Kashmiri *'Rov'* song.

Darwaze atchewun ser nemerevyzem
Zeny zem ati chei bed dargah.[62]
(While you (devotee) enter the shrine gate, bend your head in the direction of the saint's grave,
Be cautious that the celebrated saint is buried here).

As already stated that there exists a quite good number of shrines through out the length and the breadth of the valley but there are some major shrines, of course, which due to their spritio-religious and historical importance assumed very significant position in the annals of the history of muslims and as such attract a large number of devotees. These include Hazratbal shrine[63], shrine of Sheikh Nur-ud-din, shrine of Mukhdoom Sahib, shrine of Pir Dastager Sahib[64], shrine of Baba Payam-ud-din[65], Shrine of Baja-Zain-ud-din[66], Shrine of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani at Khanqah[66] and so on.

Pir-Muridi

Although Sufi and Rishi saints owing to their strict adherence to Shariah, moral rectitude and lofty code of personal conduct had set an example for the immediate disciples and followers to emulate but this message of theirs with the passage of time was permeated by the wicked and ridiculous activities of a newly born class of *mujawirs*[67], *pirs,bahaz, khadims*[68] etc, who happened to be more concerned with the material pursuits of this world of 'vanity fair'. With the passage of time, owing to their proximity to the shrine and the active participation in the management of these shrines, they succeeded in cultivating a spiritual connection with the devotees of the saints. These parasites would often undertake extensive field tours to the distant villages particularly at the time of harvest to collect the share of the produce in the name of the saint[69]. The common masses, therefore, more at the behest of these religious heads, were conspicuously marked by the performance of a number of rites, rituals and ceremonies at various shrines and Khanqahs[70]. During the first phase of our period of study, as revealed by the literary evidences, the religious class of 'Pirs' wielded a considerable clout in the religious environs of Kashmiri

society. Any religious and social function was treated as incomplete in the absence of the family Pir. The names for the new offspring in the family were suggested by the Pir. Any smallest deviation on the part of the *Murid* would invite the displeasure of the Pir. There are number of songs which suggest that the Pir was considered a person gifted with religious and spiritual merit. People, particularly in villages eagerly looked forward for the periodical visit of the 'Pir'. The same situation is penned down in the following lines of a Kashmiri folk song.

Pire vele son, pire vele son,
Chain yine, me pheliyum ha dekaloon
Pire vele son, pire vole son.
Nike chum gamut kya nundebon,
Pire vele son, pire vele son.[71]
(We eagerly wait for your arrival,
Your visit in the house will bring good fortune for the family members.
A new baby had taken birth in our family,
Your visit in the house is most auspicious).

The belief in the relevance of Pir's spritual merit could well be ascertained from this Kashmiri proverb.

Pir ne bod yekeen bod[72]
(The Pir is not great;it is your faith that is great.)

In yet another Kashmiri proverb the acclaimed position of the Per is recognized beyond doubt; the proverb goes as under:

Pir gov Mir

(Pir deserves the first attention or pir is undoubtedly gifted with religious leadership qualities).

The proverb referred to above shows that in spite of the respect that was paid to the pirs, it was nevertheless fully recognized that they made great demands on the credulity of their followers. This is further substantiated by a long poem in Kashmiri under the title *piri nama*[73] written by the nineteenth century Kashmiri poet, Maqbool Shah Kralwari. The poem portrays a revealing picture of the devices and the mechinations of these *Pirs*, which exclusively aimed at fleecing the people even of their meager possessions.A few lines of the poem *Pirnama* are given as under:

Wechan kuni jayi yud pyomut bemara,

Karan shukra zi log zalas shikara
Ne chus garmi hundei sard baduk
Yemis chui dekhl gomut nagaraduk.
Deri ches thaef gethi ne sahal bozun
Yemis yeti phok dines yetekal rozun
Qadam rety thei karan chuk zara para
Yemis balenuk karun gethi pire chara.
Yi hediye shubi dyon esy teth chi dindar,
Karv tameth ada vothi yam bemar[74].

(If a pir by chance comes to know about a sick man in the village,
He thanks to God, that a prey is caught in the net.
The patient does not suffer from any physical ailment,
he holds it is the result of an evil sprit.
It will take a long time to wade off the evil sprit,
Pir has to stay here for a long time to cure him.
The parents of the ailing person request the pir humbly
to stay with them in the hour of distress,
Which ever amount we have to pay, we will readily pay,
But the patient should regain health).

Irrational as they were, people generally attributed disease, like small pox, malaria, epidemics, plague and other infectious diseases to the displeasure of saints and pirs. The pirs were the most demended lot in the village during the troublesome days[75]. They were invited by the rural folk to lead the special religious prayers. In case of any infectious disease, there help was sought as the ailment was attributed to the evil spirits rather than the unhygienic rural surroundings. According to S.N.Dhar, "The intenirant pirs, faqirs and other so called holy men put on spiritual airs and sell charms to the believing villagers to protect their children, women and cattle from evil eye"[76].

The presence of 'Pir' in the village was considered as the most blissful event. Maqbool Kralwari graphically describes this situation. See for example:

Chi watan eqibat yeli jayi malum,
Khushi khedim karan az av makhdoom.
Semith niky bedy yiwan seri zano mared
Diwan edy moth khowaran chis garad

Qadam temy sendy buthis byon byon matheni
Garibs kun keriv kath mehrbeni
Khata asi yut kormut os kuta
Meshith go bilkulei asi eyvenez zanh
Saman seri peneny Pirs chi endy endy
Tchoperi chis lagon Qowarban vendy vendy.
(When Pir steps in the dewelling of his Murid,
The latter expresses pleasure, as if
Makhdoom himself visited his house.
All young and old assemble and sit around the pir in civility,
Some press his feet, while some remove the dirt from his face.
People present touch the feet of the pir,
and rub their faces with Pirs clothes.
What wrong we had commited, which delayed your auspicious visit,
Then all the family members sit around the pir.
People present reaffirm their faith in the spiritual powers of the Pir).

To quote Ishaq Khan,

> When small pox attacked children, Muslims would usually call their Pirs and Pandits would perform some regular ceremonies[78]

Khatm-Khwani

In complete uniformity with the Hindu tradition of reciting mantras or *shaluks* to avoid any unforeseen damage or disaster, the Muslims adopted a practice according to which the Imam of the local mosque, family Pir and family elders conversant with the Quran were invited to recite *Naat, Manqabat* and *Sufi* treatises for the safety and the security of the family members from the disastrous effects of the natural calamities and other troubles. This unique practice was known as *Khatm-i-Sharief*[79].

The evidences suggest that the childless parents also held special sittings, wherein the verses of the Quran and other *sufi* treatises were recited to invoke the aid of the sanctified souls. It is said that during the time of Maharaja Hari Singh (1926-1947) the Maharaja arranged for *Khatm-Khwani* under the supervision of Hassan Shah Bandey (Mutwali of the Ziarat of Dargah) for the birth of a son. The participants in the *Khatm-Khwani* were served with *wazwan* and were paid one to two rupees each.

Sometimes the practice of arranging *Khatm-i-Sharief* was done with the purpose of making offering to the dead. The

practice looked more akin to the Hindu practice of Sharad, which the Hindus practised with the intention of making offerings to the dead souls of their deceased family members.

Relic Worship

Grounded in the tradition, people, in spite of entering into the fold of Islam, carried some of their ancestral religious traits (No doubt with new Islamic orientation). We find expression of one such predominant trait in the form of relic worship in Kashmir. Kashmir, which once had served as one of the important centers of Buddhist learning uphed the tradition of preserving the relics, which immediately started after the death of Buddha among his followers[81]. In India, and the neighbouring countries many stupas were raised where the relics of Lord Buddha were enshrined for the devotees to adore[82]. The relic worship does not fall in line with the normative Islam.[83] It constitutes as one of the major elements of folk religion in Kashmir. Hardly there be any shrine in Kashmir that does not house either a relic of the saint buried there or the relic of some other celebrated Sufi saint. The relic worship in new Islamic colour started in Kashmir when Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, who is known in Kashmir as *Bani-e-Islam* (founder of Islam in Kashmir) brought with him two relics of holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). They were, '*Tent-pole*' and 'Standard'[84]. These relics are housed in Shah Hamdan mosque and during the period of our study, these relics were exhibited secretly during the night hours to ward off the evil effects of the natural calamities. In an acute situation of crises caused by recurring floods, famines, earthquakes, these relics were carried in a procession to the shrine of Sheikh Nur-ud-din at Tsrar, where these were exhibited before the general public.[85]

In complete divorce to the Arab tradition, where the relics of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) were considered to be some sort of amulets collected and kept for private use, in Kashmir these relics are housed in shrines or in mosques.[86] These relics mostly in the form of *Khirqa* (cloak) *dastar* (Turban) *aas-i-sharief* (cane) *khrav*(wooden patten) *alam* (tent pole) *moe-mubarak* (holy hair) were and still are displayed mostly on the occasions of '*Urs*' for the spritio-religious nourishment of the

devotees[87], who thronged into shrines in a large number. The public exhibition of these relics would also speak of the assimilation of the local Hindu-Buddhist practices in the popular Islam of Kashmir. It is not also to be wondered at, therefore, that a mere sight of the relics at cougregations especially on the eve of *Urs*, causes the devotees to recite litanies and *munaajaat* in chorus. A special characteristic of the Kashmiri Muslim social behaviour at such gatherings is the focus on the object of veneration with folded hands[88], which undoubtly suggests local influences on their mode of prayer. The following folk song shows the eagerness of the folk to have the glimpse of the relics enshrined in different shrines of the valley.

Nabi sund tarvei dedar karevei dedar karevei
Darud parevei darud parevei dedar karevei
Dastgir sebum tarevei dedar karevei dedar karevei
Quran teti parvei Quran teti parvei dedar karevei
Khanqah gethvei dedar kavvei,dedar karvei
Aurad parvei Aurad parvei, dedar karevei
Tsar kun kethvei dedar karevei dedar karevei
Dashi teti gandevei dedar karevei dedar karevei
Zen Shah Seben kethvei dedar karevei dedar karevei
Gowaphi teti ethvei gowaphi teti ethvei
Ddar karevei dedar karevei [89]

(Let us throng to the shrine of Hazratbal
We will have the glimpse of the holy hair of the prophet there, while seeing the relic, we will sing songs in praise of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H).
Let us visit to the shrine of Dastagir Sahab
We will have the glimpse of saint's relic
While seeing the relic, we will recite the verses of the holy Quran.
Let us rush to the shrine of Khanqah-i-Moula
We will have the glimpse of saint's relic there
While looking at the relic, we will recite '*aurad*' there.
Let us flock to the shrine of Shrine of Sheikh Nur-ud-din at Tsrar.
We will have the glimpse of saint's relic there, we will use the occasion for untying the rags, tied there earlier.
Let us move to the shrine of Zaina-ud-din we will have the glimpse of saint's relic there
Let us avail of the opportunity
of entering into the cave of the saint).

Naful And Animal Sacrifice

The persistence of ancient beliefs in folk religion is well exemplified by the collective exhibition of '*Naful*' custom, which attained the highest application during our period of study-mainly due to the devastating natural calamities that occurred quite frequently in Kashmir. According to the practice, people in the valley, in times of natural calamities like famine, drought, flood, earthquake, fire and plague organized special prayer processions and gatherings, most particularly at Idgah, Stringer, Tsari Sharief, Khanqah-i-Moula and at the Ziarat of Pir-Makhdoom Sahab[89a]. In these special semi-religious gatherings, people would confer their sins and invoke the aid of all saintly souls to convey their genuine sufferings in the realm of Almighty "Allah". People believed that these catastrophes were the products of their own sins, hence, unless the aid of cultivated saint was not sought, there seemed no end in sight from the disastrous effects of these calamities. As per the literary records, people moved in big processions, carrying with them in most auspicious way the relics enshrined in different shrines, to the spot selected for mass prayers. After offering special prayers, relics were generally exhibited before the faithful. This was immediately followed by loud weeping and sobbing of the folk.

In a state where there was no provision to redress the distress of the masses, people had no other option in sight, but to initiate a device which according to the tradition, provided them a chance to express their helplessness before the supreme creator. If we judge the practice in the light of then prevailing socio-political scenario, a researcher had no hesitation in holding that it was the highest type of mass protest against the inability and the callous attitude of the authorities, who inspite of being witness to the appalling heights of misery and pain, could do nothing concrete to relieve the sufferings of the people[90]. With no scheme of public welfare in sight, people developed this scheme of socio-religious pathology that to them involved less degree of official wrath and oppression. History bears ample evidence to the fact that whosoever during the period under review cultivated the courage to convey the

grievances to the authorities met with a severe fate[91]. According to the records available, people demonstrated great interest in these exercises and it could be gleaned from these lines of a folk song.

Idgah terevei nofla pervei
Aagas mangevei nofla pervei.
Chruthi shrani gethvei nofla pervei
Imdad mangevei nofla pervei
Yeti pethi tervei, Alama tulevei
Tapah teti mangevei nofla pervei
Rut teti mangavei, dadyen mangvei
Idgah terevei nofla pervei.[92]

(Let us proceed to Idgah to offer 'Noful' prayer,
We will present the petition of our woes
there before the Almighty God.
Maintaining full sanctity, we will press our heads down
on the ground in the audience of Allah.
Let us carry the sacred relic in procession to the Idgah ground,
While offering 'Naful' we will seek end
to the torrential rains and clouds,
It is there, that we prey for the health of the sick and ailing,
Let us move to the Idgah for offering 'Noful' prayer).

From the contents of the song referred to above, it looks plausible to hold that amid extreme state of misery and helplessness and disillusionment with the rapacious and inhuman behaviour of the authorities and their official subordinates, people often sought refuge in the sanctuaries of the saints or in the open audience of God for seeking redress to their sufferings and sorrows.

In addition to this Kashmiris had belief in offering animal sacrifice for keeping away the evil eye and to ward off any unforeseen ugly occurance.

It was not only in the distant past, but the tradition continues, though with less intensity that whenever an average Kashmiri finds himself or any other family member in trouble, the folk expression *"Amis theviv zuvas zu"* outrightly comes on his lips. At this hour of family trouble either a goat or a ram is sacrificed and the meat of the sacrificial animal is distributed raw among the people nearby. In order to gain fertility, women

folk hurriedly rush to the shrine of Baba Payam-ud-din at Baba Rish near picturesque Gulmarg and besides offering animals as sacrifice, the childless ladies plaster the mud *dan* (stove) there with the hope that they become mothers in the near future. There is yet another folk saying in circulation "*Thepi thepi kath karon*". This also stands for the instant sacrifice of a sheep in an hour of trouble for avoiding any bad occurance to happen.

Superstitions And Folk Beliefs

Another folk-trait observable in the collective religious behaviour of Kashmiris was their belief in the so called mystic merit of the *shodas*[93] (*charęs* consumers). The elderly *shodas* were kept in high profile by the common folk for their sincerity, straight forwardness and unstained expositions. It was a popular belief that the prayers of the *shodas* never went unheard and resultless in the realm of God. Therefore, in order to please them, it had become customary to send a portion of Kashmiri *wazwan* at the *shoda takiya*[94] for the use of *shodas* there. Unlike *banda doikher*, *shode doikher*[95] was considered more effective and result-oriented. But the institution degenerated with the passage of time and the *faqirs*, mendicants and social parasites sought admission in these centers that made them the focus of public indignation. The eminent poet of 19th century Maqbool Kralwari ridicules the degradation of the insitution in this verse.

Charas tei bhange cheth yus nange pheri
Karan tas petch depen yi gei fekiri[96]
(A person who resorts to aimless wandering after taking
smoke of charas is believed to be the true mediator to God).

An average Kashmiri's strict adherence to a variety of superstitions dates back to the earliest time. Rooted in the collective folk psyche, it stood firmly against any religious changeover that Kashmir experienced at various intervals of its history. No doubt, at the dawn of the present century, efforts were made to eradicate an average Kashmiri's belief in superstitions as these were dubbed as irrational, irreligious and unscientific. But its deep imprints on the canvas of Kashmiri psyche could not be erased altogether. Its continuance in the new scheme of religious orientation, was further necessitated

by the selfish Muslim religious class known as '*Pirs*' who found in this un-Islamic practice a ready-made source for their sustenance. Commenting on identical traits of popular Islam and Hindu Brahminism, Ishaq Khan remarks, "It would be very difficult in certain cases to make[97] a difference between a Hindu and the Muslim. One such striking similarity is observed in the practice according to which both Hindus and the Muslims keep the natural springs in high veneration."[98] During my field survey I had an occasion to observe some elderly Muslim woman pouring milk and unhusked rice in the spring at Zewan Khrew. While replying to my series of questions, these ladies expressed that we had heard from the elders that the seed of the saffron was first traced out in the spring, hence we believe it our moral duty to keep the spring in high veneration. By pouring milk and unhusked rice, we expect rich harvest in the future.

A related theme, addressed to earlier, has been quoted by Gh. Nabi Khanyari in his *Wajeez-ul-Tawarikh.* According to lore in Devsar *paragana* there was a spring called 'Pahhu' whosoever was willing to know the prospects of his future, filled an earthen vessel with boiled rice and closed its mouth after having written his name on its top and threw it into the spring. After a lapse of one year, on the specific day if the rice was found fragrant and warm, the year was considered to be prosperous, but if it was filled with clay or mud, it was considered as a sign of bad omen.[99]

Living in the environs of ignorance and illiteracy, Kashmiris generally attributed the outbreak of epidemics to the displeasure of supernatural objects than seeking its origin in the uncongenial and unhygienic physical surroundings. Therefore, different diseases were associated with different deities and folk chracters, like *Shutely Bed, Howlhej Bed, Musil Bed,*[100] etc. In order to be relieved of the fatal ailments like cholera, small pox and other water born diseases, special meals were prepared as offerings for these supernatural chracters referred to above.

In the similar manner, when people developed certain kinds of dermatological diseases they, instead, of seeking advice

from Hakims would go to certain selected spots, and rubbed the affected organs of their bodies, with mud.

Our Kashmiri folk literature is replete with the references that indicate that not to talk of the celebrated saints, ignorant people even sought the services of beggars, mendicants, *yogis* and *faqirs* for the redressal of their material losses. A Kashmiri proverb

Mety sund dop go balayan thop[101]
(An utterance of an insane is enough
to lessen the effects of all evil forces)

Like Kashmiri Pundits, Muslims of Kashmir also recognized some signs for supposed good and some signs for supposed bad. For example both Muslims and Hindus even today treat the continuous barking of dog as a bad omen. In a similar fashion, an owl sitting during day at the roof edge was considered as a bad omen. Both solar and lunar eclipses were taken as a sign of unforeseen trouble or misfortune[102].A Kashmiri proverb"*breer phyangeny*" (purring of cat) stands for trouble or discomfort.

During the chilly winter nights, when abundance of snowfall parlayed the entire village life in Kashmir, people living near dense forests with variety of wild animals developed a kind of fear-psychosis, which forced the people to believe in the existence of ghastly supernatural characters like, *veivoph*[103], *Bram Bram Chowak, Rants, Dens, Yetch* and others of like nature. We very frequently come across such characters in scores of our folk stories.

In the footsteps of their pandit brethren, Kashmiri Muslims treated certain numerals like 3,13,23 as inauspicious. Until very recently no social function was conducted on these dates of Christian or Muslim calendar. Muslims also did not affect their marriage contracts during the months of 'Safar' and 'Muharam'.

Kashmiri Pandits whose socio-religious behaviour is generally regulated and governed by the text of the '*Nilmat Puran*' were and still continue to be the firm believers of superstition, witchcraft and other supernatural beliefs. For example the sneezing in the beginning of the work was and is considered inauspicious. Against this proposition, sneezing at

the time of going to bed, the chanse sight of cow, seeing a child or a curd while leaving for work were considered auspicious. The vision of transparent water, cooked rice, breads and grapes were believed to augment good luck. Dreaming of copper coins, eating of walnuts was considered as a sign of sad event in future.[104]

In spite of different popular traits, seen in the collective religious behaviour of Kashmiri Muslims, one cannot altogether ignore an average Kashmiri Muslim's faith in the fundamentals of Islam as revealed in the Holy Quran. They firmly believe in the concept of unity of God, The Quran, final book of revelation, the finality of Prophethood and the day of the judgement.

The impressions we come across in the day today religious behaviour of Kashmiri Muslims in fact, constitute the popular cultural traits, which the neo-Muslims retained in a broader Islamic frame-work in the beginning of the 14th century.[105] The leaders of Alh-i-Hadith[106] movement, in spite of their vehement criticism, failed to convince the Muslims about the futility of the popular practices. The followers of the movement failed to make the masses understand that this popular shade of the religion is always fashioned by the cultural heritage of the people and their emotional attachment to some of the customs should be judged more from a socio-cultural prism rather than the principles of the elite religion.

A careful study of Kashmiri folk poetry reveals that Kashmiri Muslims strictly believe in the fundamentals of Islam and the same is expressed in the number of folk songs. Not to talk of religious exercises even recreational pursuits like *Wanvun* and *Rov* are initiated with the words in praise of God.

Bismillah kerith hemevei venevuneye,
Sahiban anjam onuyey.
Az hei cham Hazrati Haq senz yeri,
Peri chenis iqbales.
Khanemej kyazi chak hareni,
Sag di haqi subheniye.
(We start the *wanvun* with the name of God-
the most merciful and beneficent
Let God guide us to the enlightened destiny

I cannot express my thanks for the bounties of God
with the help of God, I am destined to good luck.
Why are you weeping my soul daughter?
Have courage, God is at your back.

The Hindus of the valley generally known as Kashmiri Pandits are the strict followers of ritualistic Brahminism. Their religious behaviour is regulated by ceremonial prepositions embodied in the earliest extant socio-religious document popularly known as '*Nilmat Purana*'.

Groomed in the mystic surrounding of Kashmir, the Pandits of Kashmir had always been bewitched by every fascinating natural object. Hence, they cultivated a religious behaviour, according to which every national object including the entire land of Kashmir possessed religious merit. This belief of Kashmiri Pandits has been recognized by Muslim scholars and historians who have had a chance to visit a Kashmir. According to the author of 'Ayeen-i-Akbari': "The Hindus regard all Kashmir as a holy land. Forty- five places are dedicated to "Mahadev" and sixty-four to 'Vishu', three to "Brahma" and twenty-two to "Durga". In seven hundred places there are carved figures of snakes, which they worship."[107] Vigne is of the opinion that there were five principal deities that were worshipped by the Hindus, there were 'Shiva', 'Surya', 'Ganapati', 'Bhawani' and 'Vishnu'. The votaries of Shiva were more numerous than those of the rest put together.[108]

The votaries or *bhagats* of Shiva were distinguished by the horizontal mark of *kesar* on their forehead whereas the votaries of Vishnu marked their foreheads vertically.

Kashmiri Pandits, as is evident from their religious application, may be termed mostly as Shiva devotes. Whatever might have been the origin of Shivism in Kashmir, there is no doubt that Shiva as a popular deity was widely worshipped (as it is even at present) from a remote period.[109] There were number of Shiv temples, where the image of the Shiv was adored by the devotees and the '*Lingam*' was worshipped.

The cult of Vishnu also existed in the valley from a very early period. With the accession of Karkotas to the throne of Kashmir in seventh century A.D., Vishnu, the adored deity of

the family, came to occupy a prominent position in the Kashmir pantheon.[110]

In addition to Shiva and Vishnu, there are many other minor Hindu Gods and Goddesses whom the Kashmiri Pandits worshipped. These include Ganisha, Surya, Agni, Lakshmi, Durga etc[111]. Ganisha was, one of the popular gods of the valley of Kashmir and worship of 'Shakti', was also widely prevalent. In the worship of goddess Durga, who is considered to be an embodiment of Shakti, animal sacrifice played an important part. Goddess 'Sharda' was one of the most celebrated deities of the valley. She was nothing but Shakti embodying three manifestations. All these gods and goddesses mentioned above are still worshipped by the Hindus of Kashmir with complete faith and devotion.

The goddess *Ragniya* [112]whose temple is situated at Tulmul, Ganderbal, is held in high veneration by the Kashmiri Pandits. They abstain from taking meat on the day of their visit to the temple. To appease the goddess *Ragnia,* milk, sugar and rice are thrown into the spring as offerings[113].

The goddess *Shitla Maata* was invoked when someone was attacked by small pox. The offering of sheep, goats silver and gold was made to get rid of this deadly disease. Sharika Devi, another local deity was also regarded as very sacred by the Hindus of Kashmir. Until very recently Kashmiri Pundits flocked every morning to the temple to have the blessings of the goddess.

Hindu worship Swas not confined to the propitiation of gods and demigods only; great and holy men were also reverenced both during their lives and long after their death. Some Muslim saints like Nur-ud-din, Dastagir Sahab, Baba Payam-ud-din, Baba Zaina-ud-din, Batmalloo Sahib were not only held in high esteem but their shrines were visited on certain days by Kashmiri Pundits.

The Mahatmya literature embodied in various Hindu Puranas bear evidence to the fact that hindus from the remotest times attached great importance to the pilgrimage to the religious sites. In Kashmir, there are number of places, which are attended by pilgrims not only from Kashmir but also from

different parts of India. The prominent among them are Amarnath Cave,[114] Gangabal Lake[115],and Mattan[116].

In order to possess religious merit, Kashmiri Pundits selected certain spots in the Valley as substitutes for Ganga and other sacred places situated in different parts of northern India. At these selected spots, Kashmiri Pundits performed certain death ceremonies of their deceased family members[117].

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3. Baba Nasib, Op.Cit., f.205(a), See also Mohib-ul-Hassan, Op.Cit., p.56. *Fatuhat-i-Kubravi,* f.1470(a). *Bharistan-i-Shahi*, f.21(a). Srivara, Op.Cit., p.142.
4. Hassan, Op.Cit., pp.221-222.
5. Ibid.
6. S.L.Shahi, *Kashmir' History and Archeology Through the Ages*, p.79.
7. Bulbul Shah was the first Sufi saint who arrived in Kashmir and took his abode at Aali Kadal on the right bank of the river Vitasta. His original name was Syed Sharaf-ud-din. He was a Musavi Sayyid from Turkistan. He came to Kashmir in the reign of King Suhedeva (1301-20). He is said to have played his role in the conversion of Rinchana to Islam. For his oratory skill, he was given the title of Bulbul Shah, Baba Daud Miskati, *Asrar-ul-Abrar,* f.45(a), Muhammad Azam Diddamari, *Waqiat-i-Kashmiri*, p.30.
8. Ishaq Khan, *Kashmiris' Transition to Islam*, p.24. "Islam did not cause abysmal destruction to ancient Kashmiri culture, but guided the course of its

development in such a manner that it eventually emerged out of the narrow waters of Brahminism into the broad sea of Islamic humanism".

9. G.M.D.Sufi, *Kasheer*, p.89. *Islamic Culture in Kashmir*, p.122.
10. Farooq Fayaz, "Cultural Perspective of Kashmir Identity", Published in the *Kashmir Times,* 1998. For elaborate description see Ishaq Khan, Op.Cit., p.47.
11. A celebrated Kashmiri poetess of the fourteenth century Kashmir. She fought vehementally against Brahminical orthodoxy and is acknowledged as one of the distinguished champions of Kashmiris Religio-cultural identity. For details see J.L.Koul, *Lal Ded.* Cultural Academy.
12. Famous Kashmiri Saint and poet who was born towards the close of 14th century near village Qaimoh of Tehsil Kulgam. He was a founder of indigenous 'Rishi' mystic order of Kashmir. *Kuliyat-i-Sheikh-ul-alam,* (Ed.) M.L.Saqi, pp.1-70. Kamil, *Noornaama*,B.N.Parimoo *Unity and Diversity* , Cultural Academy. Gowhar, G.N.,*Noor-i-Irfan.* Introduction. *Sheikh-ul-Alam ti temYsund zamaani* , Shafi Shauq, *Sheikh-ul-Alam and his Times,* Publications of Dean Students' Welfare Office, University of Kashmir, *Sheikh-ul-Alam, 'Anhar'*, and *'Sheeraza'* Special Numbers; *Sheikh-ul-Alam-Ek. Mutala*, M.Asad-ullah. pp.27-28.
13. Within the fold of Islam, it was a movement of local mystics. Sheikh Nur-ud-din was the founder of this indigenous order of Muslim mystics. (*Rishi Silsila*) Kashmir is said to have been the abode of "Rishis" long before the advent of Islam and this won for Kashmir the title of *Reshy Weer* or *Rishi Vatika.* For full details see unpublished Ph.D. thesis of Rashid Nazki, *The Historical Background of Rishi Movement*(Kashmiri). Ishaq Khan, Op.Cit., pp.37-53;*Sheikh-ul-Alam, Ek. Mutla*, As.M.Asad-ullah. Pp.27-28.
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16. Mohib-ul-Hassan, Op.Cit., p.24.
17. Parimoo, *A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir,* p.34.
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28. Ishaq Khan, Op.Cit., p.68.
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31. Srivara, *Rajtarangni,* p.235.
32. Farooq Fayaz, "Cultural Perspective of Kashmir Identity."
33. This folk song was revealed to me by a lady from Zaina Kadal locality of Srinagar. Her name was Moghli. She was introduced to me by Nissar Ahmad, a cloth merchant in Gada Kocha, Zaina Kadal, Srinagar.
34. Stein, *Rajtarangni,* Introduction, Vol.I,p.130.
35. Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir,* p.160.
36. Robert Thorp, *Kashmir Misgovernment,* p.87.
37. M.Y.Teng; Introduction to *Sheeraza' Sheikh-ul-Alam Number*, Culture Academy, p.3.
38. Unpublished folk song, Collected from Raja Banoo of Awantipora village some twenty-nine kilometers from Srinagar on the Jammu Srinagar National Highway.

39. Ignaz Godzihar, *Muslim Studies,* Vol.II, London, pp.271-77.
40. Ibid., p.280.
41. Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, popularly known as Amir-i-Kabir or Shah-i-Hamdan was one of the most remarkable personalities of the 14th century Muslim World. He hailed from Hamadan and played a significant role in bringing the Kashmiri Hindus under the fold of Islam.. For details see,*Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani- Life and Works* by Mufti Maqbool.
42. The shrine of the saint is at Tsrar. For upholding the cause of the down trodden, the saint has been given the title of *Alamdar*. See also, *Kashmiri Zuban Aur Shairi,* Ab. Ahad Azad, p.199. *Keshiri Adbich Teerikh,* A.K.Rehber, p.170.
43. Baba Rishi is the popular name of Baba Payam-ud-din. He was one of the disciples of Sheikh zain-ul-din. He is reported to have belonged to a rich family and is said to have severed all worldly relations and turned a faqir. The saint died in 1475 A.D. at Ranbuah,see *Tarikh-i-Hassan*, Vol.III, p.112.
44. Zia Singh, after his conversion to Islam came to be known as Zain-ud-din. He held an important position among the disciples of Nur-ud-din. His shrine at Aishamuqam on the road to Pahalgam is held in high veneration by the rural folk. According to Lawrence, the shrine is much respected by the boatmen of Kashmir, who take their children there to get their heads shaved for the first time. They believed that if this were done else where, the child would die or became blind. Walter Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p.288.
45. Lawrence, Op.Cit., pp.285-286. M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., p.105.
46. Ibid., Ghulam Hassan Mir, *Muslim Shrines of Kashmir,* p.61, D.C.Sharma, *Kashmir Under the Sikhs,* p.85.
47. Unpublished folk song, I collected it from Abdul Khaliq Thukroo of Ramnagar Shupian, a village near famous Ahrabal Fall.
48. A.Fodor, *A Shivtiel*, Op.Cit., p.37.

49. W.Lawrence, Op.Cit., pp.285-286.
50. Ibid., Ghulam Hassan Mir, Op.Cit., p.61.
51. Saqi, *Keshir Luka Beth*, Vol.III, p.164.
52. E.F.Neve, *Thirty Years in Kashmir,* p.117. Sharma, Bakshi, *Kashmir Society and Culture,* (ed.), p.53.
53. B.A.Khan, "Ahl-i-Hadith Attitude vis-à-vis Shrines," Paper presented in K.F.A.C.Seminar.
54. Three Shrines of prominent Rishi Saints namely Sheikh Nur-ud-din, Baba Payam-ud-din and Baba Bam-ud-din.
55. Ishaq Khan, Op.Cit., p.43.
56. M.L.Saqi, *Keshir Luka Beith* (Kashmiri Folk Songs) Vol.VI, pp.47,63,74,82; Vol.V, pp.15,37,43,51.
57. Michael Winter, *Popular Religion in Egypt*, p.106.
58. M.Y.Teing, *Kuliyat-i-Maqbool,* (Kas) Ghazal section, J& K Cultural Academy.
59. *Tarikh-i-Hassan,* Vol.I,p.442.
60. G.N.Aatish, *Keshir Luke Beth* (Kashmiri Folk Songs), Vol.2. p.17,21,51.
61. Such *manqabats* are recited by devotees in groups on annual *'Urs'* days at the shrine of Makhdoom Sahib. Since the song does not bear the name of its poet, I included it in the domain of folk literature. The literary piece is not published in any of the Kashmiri literary history.
62. G.N.Aatish, *Keshir Luke Beth,* Vol.7,19,181, Cultural Academy.
63. The shrine of Hazratbal excels all shrines in merit. The *'Dargah'* houses the sacred hair of Prophet Mohammad (P.B.H.H). Kashmiris refer to it by various titles such as Aasar-i-Sharief, 'madinat-ul-Sani', 'Dargah Sharief' etc. the shrine is some ten kilometers away from Lal Chowk on the Western shore of famous Dal Lake. For details see *Keeshur Encyclopedia,* p.13.*Tareikh-i-Hassan,* pp.91-92.*Muslim Shrines of Kashmir,* G.H.Mir.
64. Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom was one of the leading mystics of Kashmir who wielded great influence on the masses. The shrine stands on the picturesque hillock 'Hari Parbat', some six kilometers away from Lal Chowk. For details see A.Rafiqi, *Sufism in Kashmir,*

pp.21-22. *Keshur Encyclopedia,* p.215, *Special Kashmir Today,* p.154.

65. The Shrine of Pir Dastagir, Which stands at Khanyar Stringer, contains the holy relic (hair) of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jeelani, the founder and the great saint of Qadir Order. Pir means mentor and *Dastagir* means the person who holds the hands or supports the supplicant. The saint never visited Kashmir but his scholarly and spiritual merit brought him so much of reputation that people of all countries and communities came to hold him in high esteem. For details see *Tarikh-i-Kabir,* Mis keen Mohi-ud-din. *Khilasat-ul-Tawerikh,* (Urdu), Mirza Saif-ud-din; *Keshir Encyclopedia,* p.169.
66. Khanqah-i-Moula is situated in Srinagar on the right bank of river Jehlum between Fateh Kadal and Zaina Kadal. The shrine is named after the renowned mystic saint, scholar, poet, theologian and author, Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, popularly known as Shahi-i-Hamadan or Amir-i-Kabir. Mohib-ul-Hassan, *Kashmir Under the Sultains,* p.55. *Tariekh-i-Hassan,* Vol.III, p.488. *Tariekh-i-Kabir,* Miskeen Mohi-ud-din, p.178.
67. Custodians of the shrines who were entitled to the part of the shrine offerings.
68. W.Lawrence, Op.Cit., pp.289-90.
69. Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.107.
70. Dr. B.A.Khan, Op.Cit., M.I.Khan, *History of Srinagar,* (1846-1947).
71. G.N.Aatish, Op.Cit., pp.92,108,181,201.
72. Knowls, J.H. *Dictionary of Kashmir Proverbs and Sayings*, p.99. G.N.Nazir, *Keshir Depety*, p.97. Earnest, F.Neve, "The People", Published in *Kashmiri Society and Culture* (ed.) p.57.
73. Maqbool, though himself a '*Pir*' exposed the professional mechinations of the 'Pir' class. M.Y.Teng (Ed.)*Kulyat-i-Maqbool,*Cultural Academy, Introduction. A.A.Azad, Op.Cit., p.199.
74. Teng, Op.Cit., p.136.
75. Moulana Anwar Shah Shupiani,*Basharat-ul-Momineen,* Reprint, pp.17-19. M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., pp.105-106.

76. S.N.Dhar, Folk *Tales of Kashmir*, Introduction, Also see Page No's. 21,75,89.
77. M.Y.teng, Op.Cit., p.137.
78. M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., pp.105-106.
79. A special religious gathering in which the services of the Pirs, Mujawirs and the local *imam* are sought to recite the ayats of the holy Quran, *Naats, Manaqabats* and the extracts of the mystic texts. After the completion of the exercise the participants are fed with sumptuous feat and are also pleased with some cash payments. The audience is generally organized to prey for the everlasting peace of a deceased family member. The exercise is also conducted to ward of the evil effects of any bad occurrence.
80. G.H.Mir, Op.Cit., p.70.
81. Sir, M.Monier Williams, *Bhuddism in its Connection with Brahminism and Hinduism*, p.173.
82. Malley, O. *Modern India and the West*. London, Oxford, Oxford University press, p.39.
83. Goldziher, Op.Cit., pp.287-297.
84. Khan, G.H.*The Kashmiri Musalmans*, p.122.
85. G.Nabi Khanyari, *Wajeez-ul-Tawarikh*,f.66(b).
86. Goldziher, Op.Cit., p.295.
87. Gh. Hassan Mir, Op.Cit., p.65.
88. Christian, W.Troll; *Muslim Shrines in India*, (Ed.) An article by M.I.Khan 'The Significance of the Dargah of Hazratbal in the Religious and Political Life of Kashmiri Muslims', Delhi, 1992, p.175. Also M.I.Khan, *Kashmiris Transition to Islam*, p.182.
89. Unpublished folk song collected from Ab.Khaliq of Beerwah.

89(a). Since the period under reference experienced recurring natural calamities in the form of earthquakes, floods, famines and epidemics like cholera, small-pox etc.,the people of the Valley instead of seeking solutions, approached the shrines for riddance from natural calamities. The practice of visiting the religious place on such occasions led Lawrence to state that "religion of Islam is too abstract to satisfy their superstitious cravings and they turn from the mean priest and the mean

mosque to the pretty shrine of carved wood". Whenever there was a failure of rain, people visited Makhdoom Sahib's shrine in processions from all parts of the valley. The main feature of the practice was for the people to carry earthen pitchers and pails filled with water that they poured into the pond near the shrine. For details see, Khanyari, *Wajeez-ul-Tawarikh,* f.66(b), f.616. Lawrence, Op.Cit., *Kashmiri Handbook*, p.288. Duke, p.123.

90. Farooq fayaz, "Social Protest as Reflected in Kashmir Bande Pether", Paper published in '*Anhar*' Research journal of Kashmiri Department, Kashmir University,1998

91. On one such occasion, when people of Bandipora attempted to place their grievances before the authorities, it is said that the leaders of the procession were drowned alive in the Wulur Lake. See P.N.Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir; Kashmiris Struggle for Freedom,* p.202.

92. Unpublished folk song sung for me by Khateeja of Tujr village from the baramullah district of Kashmir.

93. A close review of the institution suggests that it was more an escapist occupation than a daring protest against the oppressive practices of the Sikh and the Dogra officialdom. By resorting to *charas* or opium consuming exercises these people thought themselves as relieved and freed from the strains and the stresses caused by the tyrannous treatment of the officials and the clutches of extreme poverty.

94. In Srinagar city during the period of our study, there existed number of *Shoda Takias*. Few prominent among these were the '*Takia*' at Shora Khan Gaw Kadal, Fatehkadal and Nowhatta. People addicted to *Bhang* and *Charas* would sit there idly for hours together and shared the smoke in a systematic way. This information was given to me by one Khazir Muhammad of Bagwanpora Sathu, who himself happened to be the regular visitor to the S*hoda Takia* of Gaw Kadal.

95. The collective prayers of these *Shodas* were considered more effective than the prayers of folk actors like *bhands*. During the course of their folk performances, *bhands* often stretched their hands up and sought the blessings of god for the audience around. This gesture of *bhands* was taken as a trade

trick by the spectators to grab money from the people. Unlike this, *Shoda doikheer* (prayers made by the *shodas*) was accepted pure and thus people believed that these prayers of *shodas* would not go unheard in the realm of god.

96. Maqbool Kralwari, *Kulyat-i-Maqbool*,(ed.) Teng, p.132.

97. Ishaq Khan, Op.Cit., p.105.

98. Fish cultured in natural springs are not taken both by the Hindus and the Muslims. This is also conveyed through this Kashmiri proverb:

Nage gade chi wetchi halal te kheni haram.

(A fish from spring is an object to see at, and sinful to taste).

In vernacular the spring is known as *Nag* and Kashmiris veneration of the springs had been attributed to the Naga worship, which once formed the major religious belief in Kashmir. See for detail W.crook, *Popular religion in Northern India*, and also *Rajtarangni*, (Stein) Tr. Introduction. *Nilmat Purana* (Tr.) Ved Kumari Ghai, Vol.I, (religious beliefs).

99. G.N.Khanyari, Op.Cit., f.10(b), 11(a).

100. People believed that the epidemics were caused due to the displeasure of some deities or folk characters. In order to please them and to avoid the fatal consequences of the epidemics like cholera, small-pox and others like , people observed number of ceremonies.

101. G.N.Nazir, *keeshir depety* (Kashmiri Folk Sayings), p.111, Knowles, Op.Cit., pp.51,87,102. S.N.Dhar, *Folk Tales of Kashmir*, pp.11,25,29,51.

102. *Census of India,* 1961, Village survey Report of Mattan Village, p.25. Lawrence, Op.Cit., p.300.

103. These are some of the supernatural characters found in Kashmiri folk- lore. For details see Magroob Banihali's article "Some Supernatural Characters in Kashmiri Folk Lore"; Published in *Kashmir folklore Studies*, (ed.) Gulshan Majeed.

104. Anand Koul Bamzai, *Kashmiri Pandits,* p.88. Lawrence, Op.Cit., p.130.

105. M.I.Khan, *Experiencing Islam,* pp.93,47.

106. The dawn of the twentieth century ushered a new era in the history of Kashmir due to the modern means of communication and transport which facilitated contacts of people with the outside world. Those nurtured in religious

milieu in the literary centers in India,brought with them new tenants and doctrines hitherto unknown to Kashmiri Muslim. One Hussain Shah Batku, who later on became the founder of *'Ahl-i-Hadith'* movement in Kashmir appeared on the socio-religious horizon of Kashmir in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and raised his voice against the prevailing beliefs, customs, rituals and above all the veneration of saints that he dubbed as unislamic and borrowed from the Hindus. Hassan, Vol.I, p.42; M.I.Khan, Op.Cit., p.107; Moulana Anwar, Op.Cit., pp.36-37; Sonaullah Amritsari, *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 2nd February, 1918; B.A.khan, Unpublished Ph.D.thesis, *Ahl-i-Hadith Movement in Northern India.*

107. *Q*uoted by Ferguson. Also see P.N.Tickoo, *Story of Kashmir*, p.255.

108. G.T.Vigne, *Travels*, Vol.I, p.352.

109. Sunil Chander Roy, *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*, p.152.

110. Ibid., p.157.

111. Saqi, *Keshir Luke Beth* (Kashmiri Folk songs), Vol.4, p.216. Aatish, *Keshir Luke Beth* (Kashmiri Folk songs), Vol.7, p.27. There are dozens of local deities whom Kashmiri Pandits hold in high veneration. In the Valley number of temples have been dedicated to these deities. For full details see, *Kashmiri Pandits*, Anand Koul Bamzai.

112. It is one of the most venerated temples of Kashmiri Pundits. Kashmiri Pundit visited this place in great numbers. People abstained from taking meat before going to visit the temple.

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114. It is one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in Kashmir, situated on the height of 13000 ft., pilgrims from all over the country flock to the cave to have the glimpse of Shiv's image of ice formation. The cave is said to have been discovered by a Muslim shepherd of Malik family of Anantnag. The holy cave is visited every year on 28th of July. For details, *The Beautiful Vale*, Samsar Chand, Ganesh Lal, Op.Cit., p.20. Vigne, Op.Cit., Vol.Ii, pp.8-10.

115. It is the beautiful spot in the Sindh Valley. According to the Hindu belief the sacred river Ganges originated from this

place, so it is held sacred like the Ganges. The water of this lake is considered very holy and is carried by the pilgrims for use as an equivalent of the Ganges water. After cremating their dwead , Kashmiri Hindus took the ashes for immersion in the water of the Gangabal. Vague, Op.Cit., pp.151-152.

116. In the village of Mattan in district Anantnag, there is a deep reservoir fed by holy fountains. To the Hindus of Kashmir it is as sacred as Gaya or Kurkshetra. People used to assemble there for the purpose of ablutions, the first hair- cut of their children and for other religious rites. The votaries visiting the shrine were made to sign the register after paying some cash to the priests. Ganesh Lal, Op.Cit., p.26.
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GLOSSARY

Adawat Koul	:A sarcastic idiom coined in Kashmiri during the Sikh rule for a person who was inimical by nature.
Ahli hadith	Followers of a religious reform-movement known as 'Ahl-I Hadith. The people associated with this movement take special care to adhere to the Quran and the *Hadith*. They vehemently criticize shrine-worship as they believe it goes against the concept of the Unity of God.
Aalim	A learned scholar in religious sciences ; a member of the class of Ulama.
aastaan	abode;shrine;place of pilgrimage.
Auraad	Invocatory prayer.
Baabaa	The term is used in Persian and Kashmiri for a kind of Muslim Rishis.
Baraka	blessings; power of blessing possessed by exalted Sufi souls.
Bebujnaami	bebuj, is a kashmiri word meaning lawlessness.The idiom 'story of lawlessness', is the title of Hamidullah Shahabadi's poem that depicts the anarchy of the Sikh Rule.
Begaar	forced paid or unpaid labour.
Bhand	The strolling players; the ministrels of Kashmir.
Bidat	An innovation chieflyin matters of religion; conduct of life not sanctioned by Islam .

Chhakri	a Kashmiri choral song supported by music.
Charas	hashish;bhang.
Dag shawl	The department dealing with sealing and stamping a finished shawl after collectin the stamp duty before it was allowed to leave the factory.
Dambeely	a form of Kashmiri folk dance
Dambaali mety	:the performers of dambeely.
Dastagir	: helper
Dhikir	;rememberance of God by the repetition of divine names or religious formulae.
Domb	:a village watchman
Durud	:a benediction; recitation of blessing for the prophet Mohammed(P.B.U.H) in nemaz and every prayer of the faithful.
Faqir	:a reckless ; a beggar.
Fasaad Bhat	:an idiom compound of a Persian and Kshmiri words coined in the Sikh Rule, for a garrulous trouble shooting person.
Fatihaa	:The first chapter of the Quran recited in every nemaaz;in specially arranged fatihaa ceremonies ,the fathah is recited over saltish tea for the benefit of a deceased person.
Galdaar	:a corn dealer; a hoarder.
Galwan	: originally a keeper of horses; subsequently a horse-thief; a robber, marauder.
	:the idiom was coined during the Sikh Rule in Kashmir to designate a timid soldier.
Haj	:pilgrimage to Mecca which is one of the fundamentals of Islam.
Harakaarh	:peon; scout; messenger.
Haram	:sergalio
Imaam	:one who leads prayers at a mosque.
Jaagir	: estate; rent-free land granted to someone by the rulers.

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Kaangri :a portable earthenware, covered externally by a frame of wicker work.Hot embers are put in the earthenware to make it give heat when placed under the long and loose external garment, pheran, or undwer a chadri during winter.

Kaardar :a land agent of the statewith large powers of supervision of harvest, assessment and other work concerning maintenance of land .

Kaarkhaani : a factory; a workshop.

Kaarkhaanidar :a factory owner.

Kazib rather : an idiom coined during Sikh period to designate a malicious and hard-hearted person.

Khaanqah : spiritual abode of a Sufi where spiritual training was imparted to the disciples.A public lunger is necessarily attached to a khaanqah.

Khraav : wooden slippers.

Khirqah :a patched garment worn by Sufis and Rishis.

Kotwaal : Chief police officer.

Kraam : a nickname; a caste name.

Mafajaat quli : an idiom coined to designate a cruel officer who deserves hell.

Maag : name of the tenth month in Hindu calendar,corresponding to January-February.

Manqabat :a panegyrical poem glorifying a religious personality.

Mathnavi :a poem written in rhyming couplets.

Moimubaarak :the holy hair of prophet Mohammed(P.B.U.H) lodged in in Hazratbal shrine in Stringer.

Mwakdam :Chief.;head of a village community.

Mulla :a learned man; a religious scholar.

Namaaz :a liturgical prayer of Muslims(salaat).

N'at	:a panegyric eulogizing the prophet.People recited
Naach	:dancing and singing by professional women dancers.
Nazar	: a present; an offering.
Nazraanah	:a gift ;a present.
Nikah	: a marriage contract
Pashminah	:woolen stuff of *pasham*(fleece); wool of a kind of goats reared on the uplands of Changthan and Lhasa.
Patwaari	:a record keeper of the land of a village or villages.
Pheran	:a long and loose outer garment,usually of wöol.
Pir	:Persian equivalent of the Arab Sheikh; spiritual guide;mystic leader.
Pirparast	:one whoe worships pirs.
Peiriveer	:The Valley was called piriveer because a large number of Sufis ,saints and rishis reside there and devotees visit the shrines of the pirs.
Purdah	:a veil.
Kasaabi	:a head-gear that was worn by Muslim women.
Rajatarangani	: (lit. river of kings)The name was originally given to his chronicle of Kashmir by Pundit Kalhana (1149A.D.)
Rasum	:perquisite; bribe.
Rishveer	:The Valley of Rishis,Kashmir.
Roabikhaani	:a grand drawingroom.
Sazaavul	:a revenue official senior in rank and office to Shaqdar who supervised distribution of harves between the stateand the cultivators and received salary for ten months at the rate of two rupees per month and additional money from the villagers as his perquisites.
Shahmat Singh	: An idiom coined during the Sikh Rule for a ruthless official.

Kaangri :a portable earthenware, covered externally by a frame of wicker work.Hot embers are put in the earthenware to make it give heat when placed under the long and loose external garment, pheran, or undwer a chadri during winter.

Kaardar :a land agent of the statewith large powers of supervision of harvest, assessment and other work concerning maintenance of land .

Kaarkhaani : a factory; a workshop.

Kaarkhaanidar :a factory owner.

Kazib rather : an idiom coined during Sikh period to designate a malicious and hard-hearted person.

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Shikdar :A revenue official senior in rank to kaardaar. His duty was to sit in a village and watch the crops. He received eight kharwaars of shal from the State but much more from the village as his perquites.

Shirk : paganism;idolatory.

Shraad :A kind of funeralrite or ceremony in honour of the departed souls or deceased relatives observed at various fixed periods. It consists of offerings with water and fire to gods and manes, and of food and gifts to the relatives present and to the Brahmans reciting mantras.

Sunna : the tradition of the Prophet, his manner of life according to which the faithful has to act and behave.

Tabaruk : a blessing; a gift.

Tarranga : Pundit women's headgear.

Tauhid :belief in oneness of God.

Tika :The holy mark on the foreheads of the Hindus.tirath : a shrine or a sacred place of pilgrimage.

Ulama : scholars and jurists among the Muslims upon whom the responsibility of interpretation of the Shariah rests.

Ustaad : a master workman; a teacher.

Woapalhaakh : Dispsacus inermis

Wali : Portage of God; a saint ; a protector.

Waatal : a scavenger.

Waaziwaan :Kashmiri banquet. A feast prepared by professional chefs is known as waazIwan.The term 'waazi' is basicaaly a Sanskrit term 'waje' which means to cook.Another theory with regard to the origin of the term is that it has been derived from ' ashpaaz' a Persian term that means a special cook proficient in

making soups.The term with the passage of time became 'waza'. A waaziwaan is generally prepared in the courtyard of the house by the head waazah assisted by a band of professional cooks.After skinning the sheep, the meat is distributed by the Head waazah for a variet of dishes. For '*rista*' and '*goshtaabah* plump meat is continuously pounded all day long. The concept of *waaziwaan* is said to have been imported into Kashmir from Iran and is known as an integral part of the Kashmiri way of life.For preparing a delicious *waaziwaan,* spices like cademom,cennamen,saffaron, red pepper powder, turmeric and crushed aniseed are added to different varieties of *waaziwaan. Waaziwaan* is always eaten on a large platter known as traamy around which four persons sit together to share dishes of a large variety and in abundance placed over rice.

Zabaandaraaz :a sharp- tongued person.

Zaildaar :Officer in charge of collecting revenue in a district,

Zamindaar : a Landlord; land-owner.

Zari nikah : Marriage deed tax; fee charged in conformation of a marriage deed.

Ziarat : a pilgrimage; visit toa shrine; In the Valley it also denotes a glimpse of the relics on special occasions at various shrines.The shrine of Hazratbal in Stringer is famous for being the repository of the Prophet's sacred hair that is exhibited on special occasion.

Ziaratgah :a shrine where relics are ket and exhibited on Special occasions.

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